

Rebecca Brown Burton

February 14, 1940 ~ February 15, 2023

Our beloved mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, cousin, friend, peacefully returned home to her Heavenly Father on February 15, 2023, surrounded by family.

Rebecca Brown Burton was born on February 14, 1940 in Salt Lake City, UT. She was the second of six children born to Kathryn Ormsby Hyde and Dr. John Zimmerman Brown Jr. Her childhood was filled with many adventures, most notably when she and her best friend Elizabeth decided they were going to attend boarding school in Switzerland. There, Rebecca learned and became fluent in the French language that influenced her life forever. True to her heart and love of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, she insisted on attending church services every Sunday, much to the surprise of the boarding school headmistress who thought she was up to mischief. After returning to the States, Rebecca studied French at the University of Utah where she received her bachelor's degree and was affiliated with the Chi Omega sorority. After graduating, she became a high school French teacher.

Rebecca married Wilford Burton in the Salt Lake Temple in June 1963 and they were blessed with four amazing children: Wilford, John, Dominique and Maxim. She was extremely proud of her children and an incredibly devoted mother. Her greatest joy in life was watching her children grow up. She also was a beloved aunt, sister and grandmother. Nothing pleased her more than seeing the family together.

Later as a single mother, Rebecca returned to teaching at Evergreen Junior High School. Unsurprising to anyone who knew and loved her, she was also beloved by her students. She led her students to great success at French competitions and even received a Teacher of the Year Award from the Granite School District.

Rebecca had to go on bed rest when she was pregnant with Dominique and Max. During this time Rebecca visited a used bookstore where she first discovered Harlequin Romance. At that time, she decided to try her hand in writing novels herself. After three novels published under her own name, her first Harlequin Romance was published in 1990 under her pen name Rebecca Winters. She went on to become Harlequin's most prolific writer, publishing over 175 novels. Her love of life and romance and bigger than life personality shined through in all her novels, which seems fated as she was born on Valentines' Day. True to her indomitable spirit, she continued writing until shortly before her death.

Rebecca had a deep love and understanding of the scriptures, her Father in Heaven, and her Savior. With a testimony that burnt bright in her soul, she loved all around her, and she constantly sought ways to share the gospel. She created scripture groups to further her study and love of the gospel. This led to many different callings, but she was especially known as one of the best Relief Society teachers in her ward.

Rebecca is survived by her four children: Wilford Brown Burton (Lori,) John Brown Burton (Michelle), Dominique Burton Jacobsen (Bradley), Maxim Brown Burton (Krista), five grandchildren William George Burton (Billy), Jack Taylor Burton, Matthew Burton Jessop, Gabriella Burton Jessop, Reese Kathryn Burton, and her siblings Heather Brown Early, Wendie Brown Nilson, Kathie Brown Thomas, Shelley Brown Beams and John Hyde Brown (Diana). We will miss her greatly. She was preceded in death by her parents Dr. John Zimmerman Brown Jr. and Kathryn Ormsby Hyde Brown.

Special thanks go to her dear friend Rachel Porter for her many years of love and care, and to the Lone Peak Hospital doctors, nurses, and staff for their excellent care at the end of her life.

A viewing will be held on Thursday, February 23, 2023 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. Funeral services will be held on Friday, February 24, 2023 at 11:00 am at the Crescent Park 1st Ward, 10885 Pampas Drive, Sandy, Utah 84094. A viewing will be held at the same location from 9:30 to 10:30 am prior to the services. Interment Salt Lake City Cemetery.

If you would like to watch the recorded services, please click on the blue "Watch Services" button above. The recording will be available for 30 days from the date of the service.