



Mildred Steele Wallis

Oct. 25, 1930 - Dec. 28, 2024

Mildred Steele Wallis, 94, passed away on Saturday, December 28, 2024. She is survived by her son Frank (Sidney, OH), his wife Pam, and their children Faye and Jamie; her daughter Melissa Smith (Morganton, NC), her husband Randy, and their children Skye and Erin; her son Charles (Brevard, NC); her son Tom (Winston-Salem, NC) and his partner Alyson Watts; her brothers Bill and Ronald Steele (Dillsburg and Mechanicsburg, PA); and her sister Melissa Miller (Tyrone, PA). She also counted her beloved cousin Charles Fetterhoff (Harrisburg, PA) as her sibling. She is preceded in death by her husband Frank Jameson Wallis III, her brother Frank Steele, and her sister Ramona Steele.

Millie was fascinated by the moon. The sense of awe she felt gazing at the night sky wasn't just about the magisterial beauty of a celestial body. She also loved the symbolism of people scattered in different places joined by their ability to look up and marvel at the same moon. Millie's strong belief in the power of human connection shaped her life priorities around family and community for her 94 years on this Earth.

A country girl at heart, Millie first set foot on a farm in Huntington County, Pennsylvania on October 25, 1930, when she was born to Bruce Devore Steele and Freda Mertie Shue Steele. She spent much of her youth in Harrisburg, PA, but no matter where Millie lived, her heart always considered her maternal grandparents' farm in Hill Valley, PA, her true spiritual home.

Millie earned her bachelor of science in elementary education at Shippensburg University and taught fourth grade at Marshall City School in Harrisburg for a few years.

Though formally trained in elementary education, Millie always considered family her life's work. By all accounts, she excelled in this role. "I have learned that to love and be loved is the greatest joy ever," she was fond of saying, and her husband Frank and their children were blessed to be the primary beneficiaries of that joy.

Millie met Frank while he was serving in the Army Chemical Corp. Their relationship began with a false start and a great distance between them, but once their love fully ignited, it burned brightly. They were married on September 24, 1955 and they remained fiercely dedicated to one another for more than 50 years until Frank passed away on September 30, 2009. They wrote poems for one another. Danced. Listened to opera. Worshipped. Played cards ("Low Profile Millie" was expert at pretending she was losing while holding a winning hand). Painted. Gardened. Stood together many times at the water's edge on the North Carolina coast. Traveled across the US. Most importantly, they raised a family of four children, each with a different personality and lifestyle, but all united by a deep appreciation of their familial bonds and the loving spirit that Millie and Frank modeled for them.

Millie also shared her love generously with the community around her. She was active in the First United Methodist Church and felt a lifelong connection with the friends she made in the Aldersgate Sunday School class. Feeling strongly that Morganton should be as beautiful as the people living here, Millie was passionate about beautification efforts. As a member of the Clean City Committee, she worked with the city, schools, and local media to promote more collaboration focused on preserving Morganton's visual appeal and charm. Inspired by her children's creativity, she conceived and spearheaded Morganton's Good Habit Rabbit anti-litter campaign. Over the years, she was also a passionate gun control and anti-pornography

Over the years, she was also a passionate gun control and anti-pornography advocate.

Following Frank's passing, Millie found new ways to share her loving spirit. She immersed herself in the community she found at Grace Ridge, and eventually became very close to Mr. Conley Mitchell. On August 20, 2016, she and Conley

invited friends and family to join them in a commitment ceremony celebrating the love that had developed between them. Their companionship lasted until Conley passed away on September 14, 2020.

More than anything else, Millie Wallis relished every moment when friends and family could gather to share memories and stories with one another. In that spirit, a memorial service will be held at the First United Methodist Church on January 11, 2025 at 11 AM, with Rev. Dan Hester officiating. Following the service, the family will receive friends in the fellowship hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be sent to The First United Methodist Church Building Preservation Fund (200 N. King St., Morganton NC, 28655) or Amorem General Fund (902 Kirkwood St. NW, Lenoir NC, 28645).

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall



–Anonymous

Frank n Melissa Was so sad to hear of your mother's passing. She was always so supportive of you guys in your endeavors. Prayers n Hugs for all.

–Roger Austin Hart



–Anonymous

I was great friends with Charles Wallis all of my years growing up in Morganton. We lived about a 3 minute walk through the woods from each other. I spent many days at their house and only have the most fond memories of the entire Wallis family. Thinking happy memories during this time Charles. **Just a few memories: Charles used to draw out these elaborate maze puzzles for me. I always loved trying to figure them out, unsuccessfully usually, lol. Charles was almost always the spelling bee champion of the entire school. He chose me as

his "witness" when he had his final contest. I loved that too Charles! I became infatuated with spelling ever since that time.

–Perry Hilton Lachot



Tom, We are thinking of you and so sorry for your loss. We hope you and your family are able to find comfort during this difficult time. David Nicholl and Amy McCaskill

–David Nicholl & Amy McCaskill

Dear Melissa, Frank, Charlie & Tommy & Family, I am deeply saddened to hear of your mom's passing. She was one of the kindest people on this Earth I ever met. Always a dear friend to my mom & dad and to myself, I never heard an unkind word from her mouth. Just before my mother passed away on December 8, 2009, Millie was visiting Mom and told her to say hello to Frank for her and to tell him to behave. It brought a smile and chuckle, along with tears, to everyone in her room. Even though I live in Washington now, I always would ask about your mom on my phone calls with her friend, Lana Reavis Smith (my dad's 2nd wife), always sending my love and wishes to her. My condolences to each and every one of you. May you be comforted by knowing your mom & dad are together again. I have no doubt they are with my parents....probably all of them dancing. With deepest sympathy, LeAnne Smith Dudley

–LeAnne Smith Dudley



Such a sweet lady. Praying for her family during this time

–Alicia Allen

