



Wilda "Billie" Leach

March 25, 1927 - December 7, 2018

Wilda Jean (Swain) Leach passed away peacefully in her sleep at home surrounded by family at the age of 91 on December 7, 2018. Known most of her life as "Billie," she was born on March 25, 1927, in Franklin County, Ohio, to Kathryn Elizabeth Perdue Swain and Robert Mitchell Swain.

Billie was one of three girls known as the Swain sisters, who grew up in Columbus, Ohio and went to West High School there. Their home was a gathering place that was always open to their friends and neighborhood kids. The sisters, DeDe, Vivian, and Billie, were very active and well-known in their community. As the youngest and as a bit of a tomboy, Billie was very close with her father Robert, while their mother Kathryn was busy keeping the older girls' social calendar full.

In 1948, Billie accepted a marriage proposal from her future husband, Joseph P. Leach, then the youngest mayor of the United States at age 25 in Sharonville, Ohio. Billie finished college at Ohio State University and got married a few days later, their wedding taking place on July 31, 1949. (Billie's father gave her a toolbox for her wedding present that she used for years to come, fixing things in her home, just as her dad had taught her). For their honeymoon, the newlyweds packed up their Roadster and drove across country to California, where Joe Leach had a position awaiting him as city manager of Redondo Beach.

Billie became a school teacher at Dapplegray Intermediate School in Rolling Hills Estates as the couple settled into a historic home in the South Bay's Redondo Beach by the ocean, known to all as "The Brown House." After welcoming two children, Cathy Anne (Cat) and Joseph Kevin, the family moved from Redondo Beach to the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and eventually Joe became city manager for Rolling Hills Estates. Billie stayed home to raise the kids until returning to the Palos Verdes Unified School District as a substitute teacher, librarian, and later, to work in records and the testing and evaluation department at the district offices. She lived in her Rolling Hills Estates home until her final days. She also helped raise two of her four grandchildren in the family home, a hub for 3

generations of family members.

Billie had a varied and interesting life. Her son, Kevin, played golf from an early age, so family vacations were worked around golf tournament weekends. Many happy memories came from those fun family road trips. Aside from working in the Peninsula community, Billie also played bridge for several decades and had a weekly bridge night with three close friends. After her husband Joe passed away in 1985, Billie took to traveling, and was able to journey to Asia. Later when her daughter Cat moved to Mendocino, Calif. and had two children, Billie would grab a girlfriend and take a spontaneous road trip to the northern coast of California in her trusty Honda Accord, driving herself there in all kinds of weather, ever the intrepid traveler. Billie is survived by her daughter, Cat Spydell, and her son, Kevin Leach and his wife, Caroline, and her four grandchildren, Kodiak Spydell, Cassidy Spydell, Cameron Leach, and Connor Leach. She will be greatly missed.

Cemetery

Green Hills Memorial Park
27501 S. Western Ave.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA,
90275

Events

DEC 18 Funeral Ceremony with Graveside 11:30AM

Green Hills Memorial Chapel
27501 S Western Ave., Rancho Palos Verde, CA,
US, 90275

Comments



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Cat Spydell - December 20, 2018 at 08:30 PM



“ Billie and her mom Kathryn Swain

Cat - December 20, 2018 at 08:31 PM



“ I love you Mom and will always miss you. You have given me so many life lessons. Grateful forever! Thank you for being such an awesome Mom and "Grammy" to my kids and Kevin and Caroline's kids.

My eulogy for my mom:

<https://catspydell.wordpress.com/2018/12/21/eulogy-for-wilda-billie-leach/>



Cat Spydell - December 20, 2018 at 08:27 PM



“ Everytime I misuse the phrase "me and (insert name)", I will hear her telling me "it's (insert name) and I". There are so many other examples, she taught me so much. She will always be in my memories.

Kodiak Spydell - December 19, 2018 at 02:05 AM



“ Billie was the kindest and sweetest mother-in-law anyone could ever wish for. Her son Kevin and I were blessed that she stayed at our house for a week in the month before she passed away. We spent some very special times together. What I cherish the most about Billie is her love for books and learning, her devoted interest in

everyone else's lives and happiness, and how she opened her heart and her home to her four grandchildren. Rest In Peace, sweet lady.



Caroline Leach - December 18, 2018 at 11:37 PM



“ i just know billie always made me feel welcome any time i stopped by to see cat. that meant the world to me. thank you billie. love

morris caraway - December 18, 2018 at 10:19 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Green Hills Mortuary & Memorial Chapel - December 14, 2018 at 06:52 PM