



Jennie E. "Bette" Annett

January 4, 2016

Jennie E. "Bette" Annett, age 91, of Hopkins, MN passed away in her home on January 4, 2016.

Known for her quick wit, ready smile, selfless generosity and endless patience, Mrs. Annett was a friend, trusted confidante, and counselor to many. A voracious reader, she loved poetry and often quoted passages from the works of Henry Longfellow and Robert Burns. Passionate about politics, she enjoyed discussing and debating the issues of the day. She had a talent for finding humor in the most difficult situations, and relished the comedy of Bob Hope, Jerry Seinfeld, Monty Python, and many others.

Fiercely proud of her British heritage, the naturalized American retained a love of the Queen, all things royal, and an enduring devotion to her Australian homeland. Many stories she told were prefaced with the phrase: "When I was a girl in sunny Sydney. . . ."

Born in Sydney, Australia to Thomas H. Grozier and Jennie E. (Strain) Grozier, Mrs. Annett grew up in Greenwich Point, a small harbour-side community not far from the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Her father, a native of Scotland, served as chief engineer at the Sydney Morning Herald, while her mother, an American from New Jersey, raised a family of five. Born in December 1924, Mrs. Annett was the youngest.

From age nine to 16, she studied at Pymble Ladies College, a private school she attended both as a day student and a boarder. After graduating, she worked in the Sydney Daily Mirror's "morgue," a department where reporters' notes and clippings were archived for later use. Eventually, she got the opportunity to do some reporting, and wrote numerous obituaries during World War II. She also volunteered for the Australian Red Cross, and served many Australian, English, and American soldiers during the war.

In 1947 she immigrated to the United States and was employed by the Australian Consulate in New York City. In 1948, she married William L. Annett, advertising director of the Milburn-Short Hills Item in New Jersey. She first met Mr. Annett while he served as a U.S. Army sergeant during his wartime deployment in Australia.

The couple had two daughters, Jane and Katharine, while residing in Livingston, NJ, a New York area suburb. In 1955 they moved to Sydney where a third daughter,

Diana was born. In 1959, they returned to New Jersey where their son, William Jr. was born.

In the 1970s, Mrs. Annett re-entered the workforce with a part-time clerical job at the West Essex Tribune in Livingston. Often remarking that she "was born with ink her veins," she was thrilled to be back in the news business.

Later, when the family relocated to Kingwood, a rural community in central NJ, she worked for the Somerset Messenger Gazette in Somerville, where she eventually supervised the Classified Ad department. A talented proofer with a keen eye for spelling and grammar, her colleagues referred to her as "Madame Grammarian." She retired from the Gazette in 1984.

Mrs. Annett and her husband resided in Kingwood until 2003, when they moved to Little Egg Harbor, a coastal community in southern NJ. Following her husband's death in 2004, Mrs. Annett moved to Hopkins, MN, settling near her son William and his family.

She is preceded in death by her husband William L. Annett; parents Thomas and Jennie Grozier; siblings William Grozier, Allan Grozier, Margaret Grozier Hagar, and Thomas Grozier Jr. Mrs. Annett is survived by children Jane Ross, Katharine Annett, Diana Annett, and William L. Annett, Jr; grandchildren William Ross, Rebecca Griffith, Christopher Thiel, Sharon Therien, Anrong Brett, Zong Brett, Grant Huffman-Annett, and Juliana Huffman-Annett; and a great-grandchild, Alden Thiel.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Susan G. Komen for the Cure, a non-profit organization dedicated to ending breast cancer.