



Marianne Anderson

February 6, 1931 - November 21, 2020

Marianne Anderson

Age 89 of Shorewood, MN, after a courageous battle with COVID-19, passed away peacefully on November 21, 2020. Her two beloved sons Ron and Cliff were each holding a hand while, poignantly, remaining family were only permitted to connect remotely by live video-link to say their goodbyes due to the pandemic. Happily though, she left this world for the next listening to the sound of her own voice and that of her late husband Victor captured in a 2007 public radio interview in which they related their "Pen Pal Love Story."

Marianne was born on February 6, 1931 in Berlin, Germany, the only child of Otto and Liselotte Baum. In April 1933, appalled with the Nazis and Hitler's ascension to power as Chancellor, Otto moved his family to Tel Aviv, British Palestine.

Palestine brought Marianne together with her soul mate, best friend, and eventual husband Victor in the most remarkable way. In autumn 1942, Vic's older brother Ron, a British soldier, on leave from the front battling Rommel and the Germans in the African Western Desert, met Marianne in Tel Aviv when she was 11. Her family had hosted Ron for a meal. Via letter, Ron suggested to his then 17-year-old brother Vic (the youngest of five boys) still back in England that he should be "pen pals" with the little girl with big brown

eyes who spoke German and Hebrew, but was still learning English. Just weeks later, Ron was killed at the Second Battle of El Alamein. For Vic, Marianne was his last connection to his cherished brother Ron who unwittingly left him the "gift" of Marianne.

Victor and Marianne wrote for 12 years, from 1942 to 1954, always half a world apart, never meeting. As World War II concluded, their lives were further diverging rather than intersecting, apparently with paths never to cross.

Marianne's family emigrated to America in 1948. She attended the Rhodes Preparatory School in Manhattan, New York, a high school that attracted students from all over the world. Proms were held at the nearby Waldorf - Astoria Hotel. Marianne graduated in 1950, passing the New York State Regents Exam, required for graduation.

Shortly thereafter, in whiplash- like-fashion, her family relocated from the "City That Never Sleeps" to the "Mother City of the Dakotas," Yankton, South Dakota. Economic survival trumped the big city for her emigrant father Otto who had obtained a needed medical job as Clinical Director of Yankton State Hospital.

In part due to her family's relocation to the Midwest, Marianne attended the University of Minnesota. She graduated in 1954 with an International Relations Political Science Degree, with minors in History and Psychology. She also obtained a B.S. degree in Elementary Education.

Half a world away, Victor had returned from a four year tour in Burma and India for the British Army (1944-1947), had trained to become a lawyer (1948-1950) and began working as a solicitor in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Northumberland, England. It was then that a wayward 1953 holiday card from Marianne, whom he still had never met, arrived four months' late in March

1954. The Royal Mail had painstakingly forwarded the card three times until miraculously it found Vic. The greetings gave news that Marianne would be visiting Europe and England for the first time since she fled Europe as a refugee. She queried somewhat sheepishly whether, perhaps, they should finally meet. Vic responded they should.

Following a torrid six-month rekindling of their 12 year pen-pal relationship, on August 17, 1954, just three days after finally meeting Marianne on Platform 14 in London's Liverpool Street Station, Vic, now age 28, proposed marriage to Marianne, now a less innocent 23. Thereafter, they enjoyed 60 plus years of marriage together from June 11, 1955 until Victor's passing on January 27, 2016.

Marianne helped to support Vic through law school at the U of M. Thereafter, she taught elementary school until she became a mother. While raising a family and beyond, she volunteered at the Guthrie Theater, the Minnesota Orchestra and the Minneapolis Art Institute, among other arts organizations. There was nothing in the world that Marianne loved more than her beloved husband Vic, rivaled perhaps only by her two sons and her four grandchildren, the latter of which she was so proud that they were a small piece of her and Vic's immortality, but for which she self-effacingly never gave herself proper credit for helping shape.

Marianne loved the arts including museums, classical music and enthusiastically sitting on the edge of her seat at the theater watching a good play or movie. She devoured books and spent many a night in book club. Not an athlete, aerobics at her local health club, the Marsh, nonetheless, was a daily staple for decades, which, along with walks with Vic at the University of Minnesota Arboretum, the City Lakes or at Hulne Abbey when visiting Vic's native Northumberland, England, helped her make 89. She loved flowers,

beautiful sunsets, and a chocolate mousse, creme brûlée or a piece of chocolate cake for dessert (especially if it came off someone else's plate because then the calories didn't count).

Known as “Nona” to her grandkids, she was feisty, talkative and thoughtful. As an octogenarian, she enthusiastically picked up Facebook, Facetime, and texting like a champ so she could follow her grandchildren’s journeys through their lives in real time. She was a bit of a “Facebook legend” to the younger set. She was never short on advice while also exemplifying through her love for Vic what a fierce but gentle love looks like with a true soul mate. She was each grandkid’s biggest fan.

We will miss your smile, your laugh, and your devotion to those you loved. As you and Vic said every night of your married lives before bedtime, vowing never to go to bed angry with each other, "Goodnight and bless you." You may now Rest In Peace because you are now with your Vic “in eternity, as in life,” which was your last dying wish.

Marianne is survived by her sons, Ron (fiancé Barbara Brandt) and Cliff (Ginny); grandchildren, Ian and Eva along with Victoria and Tatum and their mom, Jane; nephew, Michael Anderson (Marianne) and nieces, Collete Anderson Mayne (David) and Denyse; and grand nephews and nieces, Steven, Vicki, Rachel, Ben, Ben and Lucy. Marianne was preceded in death by her parents, Otto and Liselotte and her husband, Vic.

Due to COVID-19, a memorial service celebrating Marianne’s life will be held outdoors in the spring, date and time to be announced in the future. In lieu of flowers, tax deductible donations may be made to COVID-Solidarity Response Fund for WHO. Donate at COVID19ResponseFund.org.

Washburn-McReavy.com

Edina Chapel 952-920-3996

Tribute Wall

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“ *I'm so deeply saddened at the loss of your dear Marianne. I got to be her friend and receive her wonderful grace and wisdom as her Nia Dance teacher at The Marsh from 2013-2019. She was so wonderful to dance with, her smile infectious, her joy of living so present and openly shared. I will miss her dearly. Sending all her family my deepest condolences and prayers.*



Beth Giles - November 30, 2020 at 08:35 PM