



Betty Cree VanPoole Auten

August 9, 1932 - May 22, 2023

Betty Cree VanPoole “Becky” Auten, 90, of Salisbury passed away Monday May 22nd, 2023 at Novant Health Rowan Medical Center.

She was born August 9th, 1932, in Rowan County to the late Freida Edmundson and Baxter Melvin VanPoole.

Her mother passed away when Becky was 3, leaving her and siblings Mary Ruth and Gladys Louise in the care of their maternal grandparents from Mills River, NC. She had fond memories of her childhood in Mills River playing with her sisters and tons of cousins that still call the area home.

The family moved back to Salisbury permanently due to a job relocation during Becky’s early teens.

In 1949, Becky graduated from Boyden High School and went to work right away as a bookkeeper for the J.C. Penny store on N. Main Street in Salisbury. She was introduced to her soon-to-be husband Edward Eugene “Gene” Auten by mutual friend Gene Connell, and the two were married December 23rd, 1956. Gene Connell’s wife to be was also a Betty “Swaim”, and the foursome stayed best friends for a lifetime.

Becky and Gene joined the St. John’s Lutheran Church of Salisbury in the early 1960’s and remained members until their passing.

In 1973, after her children Kevin, Kelly and Kim were born, Becky started a new position with the local H&R Block franchise on N. Main in Salisbury. She recounts being so nervous meeting her first client, that she asked the franchise owner if she could change roles and just be the receptionist.

Becky quickly overcame her nervousness and 50 years later, she would be honored nationally by H&R Block for her years of service. She was beloved by clients and colleagues alike and was still employed at the time of her passing. Becky was a true southern lady, known for her quiet demeanor, love of family, independent spirit and the best coconut cake and pecan sandies ever. She loved watching the 1978 series "Dallas" and joked how she would like to be as loved and sweet as "Miss Ellie" from the show. Based on the accolades and testimonies from her family, friends, and numerous clients over the years, we think she nailed that one.

She loved her grandchildren and reveled in all their academic and athletic accomplishments over the years.

This past fall, her children surprised her with a 90th birthday celebration weekend in Mills River. They visited the old homestead and toured the private family burial grounds high atop a bluff overlooking a beautiful valley. The weekend culminated with a birthday picnic in her honor at the Mills River Baptist Church she attended as a child. Becky took the family to see the old stone steps she used getting into the creek that runs behind the church where baptisms are still held to this day. It was a beautiful memory for all, and the church and grounds are those of a Norman Rockwell painting.

In addition to her parents and husband Gene, she was preceded in death by two sisters (Mary Ruth & Gladys Louise VanPoole) and daughter Kristen Layne Auten.

Those left to cherish her memory are son Kevin Auten (Valerie Risner) of Salisbury, daughter Kelly Auten Powlas (husband Barrett) of Charlotte, daughter Kim Auten Smyth (husband Duane) of Statesville and her grandchildren Dylan Auten, Kristen Powlas and Addie & Molly Smyth.

Visitation will be held from 4-7p.m. Tuesday May, 30th 2023 at Summersett Funeral Home. Funeral service will be at 1p.m. Wednesday, May 31st, 2023 at St. John's Lutheran Church with the Reverend Wayne Cobb and Pastor Lori Carter officiating. Interment will follow at Rowan Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. John's Lutheran Church, 200

W. Innes Street Salisbury, NC 28144; Community Care Clinic of Rowan County, 315-G Mocksville Avenue, Salisbury, NC 28144 ; and Rowan Helping Ministries , PO Box 4026, Salisbury, NC 28145.

Summersett Funeral Home is assisting the family with funeral arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Rowan Memorial Park

4125 Franklin Comm Center Rd
Salisbury, NC 28144
(704) 636-8751

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 30. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Summersett Funeral Home
1315 W. Innes St.
Salisbury, NC 28144
(704) 633-2111
<https://www.summersettfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Service

MAY 31. 1:00 PM (ET)

St. John's Lutheran Church
200 W. Innes St.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall



“ *Summersett Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten*



Summersett Funeral Home and Cremation Center - May 31, 2023 at 08:29 AM

SK

“ *Mrs. Auten always took time to talk at H&R when stopping by there. She was a great person and will be missed.*

Steven Keels - February 28, 2024 at 07:14 PM

SR

“ *Sending love to family, as you grieve her loss.*

Sabrina Rufty - July 02, 2023 at 09:06 PM

KH

“ *Kelly, Kim, & Kevin, I'm so sorry for the loss of your mom. But, wow.....what a life well lived. She was amazing.*

Kay Harviel - June 01, 2023 at 03:37 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 30, 2023 at 06:29 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 30, 2023 at 08:28 AM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*

May 29, 2023 at 11:24 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 29, 2023 at 11:24 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 29, 2023 at 08:52 AM



“ *She was one of the sweetest ladies I ever had the honor of meeting. She was simple, honest, and kind. Your family will be in my thoughts and prayers Cathy Griffin.*

Cathy Griffin - May 28, 2023 at 09:03 AM



“ *Kevin, Prayers for your Entire Family. John 14:1-3*

Pastor Joey Spry - May 28, 2023 at 04:47 AM



“ *Kevin,so sorry for the loss of your mom.My thoughts and prayers are with all your family.*

Linda Messick - May 27, 2023 at 11:11 PM



“ *I didn't know her well, but knew her when she was at J.C. Penny's. She was a very nice lady. My condolences go out to Kevin and all family. May see rest in peace.*

Brenda B. morris - May 26, 2023 at 06:57 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 26, 2023 at 05:56 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 25, 2023 at 04:27 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Betty Cree VanPoole Auten.*



May 25, 2023 at 12:49 PM