



## Betty Jean zum Brunnen

July 30, 1929 - August 22, 2018

Betty Jean zum Brunnen, devoted wife, mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, aunt, traveler, businesswoman, antique & collectible dealer, and a long time resident of Rowan County, died in Cary, NC where she had lived in recent years to be closer to her children.

Born July 30, 1929, in Gold Hill, NC, to her parents, the late Leizel Rollins Wagoner and Huldah Barrier Wagoner, she died Wednesday, August 22, 2018, after a period of declining health.

She was born the youngest of nine siblings in rural Gold Hill, NC, and was a farm child of the depression, spending her early years at the family homeplace, learning how to make do & have fun with simple solutions. Eventually a local beauty queen, she was the second annual Miss Faith Fourth of July, in Faith, NC, and learned to wave and smile in parades across the county many times for other events. She graduated in 1947 from Richfield High School and later matriculated from Greensboro Women's College (now UNC-G), where she waited and bussed tables with friends in the cafeteria. One of the early Presidents of the Salisbury Business & Professional Women's Club, she taught for the local Civil Air Patrol which later became the Rowan Rescue Squad. She was also a Paul Harris Fellow recipient from the Salisbury Rotary Club, and was involved in a multitude of Rowan County organizations, particularly those concerning the cultural arts and civic

activities.

A savvy businesswoman who eventually ran the family CPA firm as an office manager for nearly 20 years, she was one of the early (some say she was the first) professional female accountant(s) in Rowan County. She initially started work at Frank P. Buck Company (later Sherrill & Smith). While in that job, she met her future husband, Chester, a CPA, when he timed his morning breaks so he could 'run into her' frequently on the sidewalk in downtown Salisbury. This 'accidental' meeting led to one of Salisbury's early 'corporate mergers,' as it was once described in the Salisbury Post. They were married on August 23, 1952, at Pfeiffer College Chapel in Misenheimer, NC.

She was a member of the Democratic Party her entire adult life and served actively with the Rowan County Democratic Party and in various campaigns (as treasurer and in other positions). She was a devoted member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, serving as an altar guild member for over forty years, and with the Church Bazaar (organizing for years the Attic Treasures booth— of course!), among other activities there.

Betty Jean never met a yard sale or flea market she could pass up. No antique dealer could match her, and woe to any individual who underestimated this delicate southern (iron) magnolia negotiator with a gentle smile. Whether it was going to the local yard sale, the beach, or trekking to the backwoods of Alaska, she loved time spent with the sisters closest to her and the travels they took together – as well as the laugh-filled adventures with her nieces.

Her legacy is multi-faceted: with her husband she instilled in her children a love of travel, adventure, nature, history, and story-telling by planning extended travels & adventures for the family across the country and other far reaches, always reading to everyone in the car AAA travel-book summaries of each town passed through; she was a loving grandmother who continued her

practice of digging out things for her grandson to read & play with (maps, stories, history books); she leaves the heartfelt appreciation of hard but always rewarding summer work and gardening with the family, delicious recipes that will be hard to match, and a home full of laughter and love for many years near Salisbury, NC, which over time became a living museum of dearly held family memories and a treasure-trove of fascination for children of all ages.

Her husband, a long-time civic leader and CPA in Salisbury known for his signature mustache and dignified gait, Chester (Chet) David zum Brunnen, Sr., predeceased her in 2000. Together they picked the earth from the tree of life and handed a wondrous world to their two adopted children. There's a lot of gratitude for that.

She is survived by her daughter & son-in-law, Elizabeth Jeanne & Richard Stone, of New Hill, NC; son & daughter-in-law, Chester David (Jr) & Serena Michelle (Ebhardt) zum Brunnen, one grandson, Carlton Jacob zum Brunnen of Bells, NC; numerous four-legged grandchildren who always showed their affection for her whenever they visited; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and countless friends and acquaintances.

Betty Jean demonstrated a remarkable grace and gratitude in her final days. It was a lesson for all who were in her presence. Betty Jean's family wants to acknowledge that same grace was matched in every way by the Carolina House (Brookdale McArthur Park) and the Transitions Hospice teams. The affection and gratitude shared spread as broadly as Betty Jean's smile.

The family will receive friends Monday, August 27, 2018 from 1:00 - 2:00 PM in the Parrish Hall of St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

The funeral service will begin at 2:00 PM in the church sanctuary with the Rev. Robert Black officiating. Burial will be held at City Memorial Park.

Memorials may be made to The St. Luke's Altar Guild Fund, c/o St. Luke's Episcopal Church,, 131 W. Council Street, Salisbury, NC, 28144. The Children's Home Society of North Carolina Home (formerly the North Carolina Children's Home) of Greensboro, NC, or the Veda B. zum Brunnen Memorial Fund, c/o St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 131 W. Council Street, Salisbury, NC, 28144.

Arrangements are in the care of Summersett Funeral Home, Salisbury, NC. Online condolences may be made at [www.summersettfuneralhome.com](http://www.summersettfuneralhome.com).

# Cemetery Details

## City Memorial Park

1316 West Innes St  
Salisbury, NC 28144

# Previous Events

## Service

AUG 27. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
131 West Council Street  
Salisbury, NC 28144

## Service

AUG 27. 2:00 PM (ET)

St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
131 West Council Street  
Salisbury, NC 28144

# Tribute Wall

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“ We loved "Mrs. Z." She was an amazing lady. Mama always called her a "social butterfly." :) In the last years she lived in Salisbury, we enjoyed her so much. She loved to go to plays, would ride with us to mtgs. I will never forget one Christmas, our youth at Bethel Lutheran were out Christmas Caroling and we stopped at her house. She invited everyone in and it was such a treat for the kids and adults to see all the neat Christmas decorations she had in her living room. She was so kind to us and always positive. I will never forget her coming when my brother passed away with Jeanie and we always still think of her and miss her when we ride by her house. I know she loved finding deals and good things at yard sales. She knew everyone, everytime she was out with us, she'd see people she knew from so many different avenues. She was one of a kind! Also, we think of her as really an amazing person to be a "working woman" for her time and she was so smart. She told us lots of stories about her coming from Gold Hill, parties she used to attend, how she met Mr. Chester, sending Jeanie and David off to college, Jeannie's horseback riding when she was growing up, and her grand-dogs, David's theatre work. You had a great mama. She was also so kind to animals didn't mind if we had our Cocker Spaniel in the car when she rode with us. She was also so good to Faithful Friends Animal Sanctuary, she went to events with us as it was being started and built. We will really miss her and we know she is heaven. Bless you David and Jeannie, she was really proud of you and she also lit up talking about Carlton.  
Lots of Love and Prayers going up,  
Lora and Sandra Owen

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Lora - August 24, 2018 at 10:12 PM

BD

“ *Brent & Angie David purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Betty Jean zum Brunnen.*



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**Brent & Angie David** - August 24, 2018 at 10:09 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Betty Jean zum Brunnen.*



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August 24, 2018 at 07:00 AM