



Mrs. Margaret Berry

January 26, 1926 - February 19, 2009

Margaret Berry passed away on February 19, 2009 at home with loving family and friends by her side. Born in Detroit in 1926 to Scottish immigrants, James and Jenny (Walker) Watson, Margaret had 3 brothers, Charles, Bill and Jim. Margaret's father, a sailor and soldier in his youth worked as a Teamster and supported the family well through the Great Depression. A gifted student, Margaret excelled at Alma College, and there she met Verne Berry, just returned from WWII duty on a destroyer in the South Pacific. Verne and Margaret married in 1947, traveling and studying the U.S. and Mexico before beginning careers in journalism and teaching in Michigan. They brought 5 children into the world in the 1950's and also relocated several times, including a stint in California. By 1963 the Berrys were settled into a landmark Victorian home at 213 Elm Street, Margaret's abode and pride for the next 40 years. Margaret made an extraordinary home on Elm Street, and a welcome place for an extended and diverse community of friends who came for conversation, advice, shelter, band-aids, coffee or scrabble games, delivered with love by Margaret and Verne. In their home and carriage house they sponsored local artists and foreign students. Their appreciation of the arts and travel was conveyed to their children. Margaret returned to teaching in 1967, working at Continuing Education for Young Families, an innovative public school for pregnant students. Margaret transformed the lives of many young women over 15 years, teaching them biology, pre-natal and infant care and critical life skills. She created one of the first family planning curricula in the

U.S. Margaret and Verne retired in the early 1980's, enjoying friends and time their cottage at Lake Michigan Beach, and traveled to Europe and Africa. Margaret was active in the community as well, working with ALPA to save Asylum Lake from development and volunteering at Woodward School well into her 70's. Verne died in 1998. Margaret is survived by her children; Chris, Jim, Tom, Meg and Joan Berry and granddaughters; Hannah Berry Kinley, Loren RothBerry and Emily Margaret Berry. Friends and family will gather at Margaret's home at 1715 Marywood, Kalamazoo on Sunday between 2:00 and 5:00. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations to Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan for their concern and care during Margaret's illness.

Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs. Margaret Berry*

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ *Mrs. Margaret Berry*

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ *Condolences, To you Berrys, I have only the fondest memorys of my OTHER MOM.*

*Yours , Cooper##imported-begin##COOPER C.
TOMLINSON##imported-end##*

March 04, 2009 at 12:42 AM



“ Dear family and friends of Margaret Berry,
I am very sorry to learn of Mrs. Berry's death. It was my privelege to have Mrs. Berry as my supervising teacher when I was a student teacher at the Continuing Education Center for Pregnant Teens in Kalamazoo in 1973. At our first meeting, I felt lucky to be assigned to Mrs. Berry's classes! Margaret was an excellent mentor and set a wonderful example for me. She had such a warm repore with the girls at the school, and taught them things they needed to know in a way that made them want to know it. Mrs. Berry was so helpful, encouraging, and kind to me. I was nervous and lacked confidence, but Mrs. Berry was more than willing to coach me. I could see and share in the joy she expressed in working with the teen mothers in her classes. I am so grateful to have had a chance to know Margaret. I got married at the end of that semester (and still use the cookbook she gave me as a bridal shower gift), and moved to Ohio for several years. When my husband and I returned to Kalamazoo, now many years ago, I often thought of Mrs. Berry, but I failed to look her up. That is my regret, as I am sure she was a wonderful, vibrant friend to all who knew her well. Looking back, I know that Margaret Berry made a difference in my life as a teacher and as a mother, even though I only spent one semester with her. She was a blessing--a very positive, fun, wise woman, and I am sure that everyone will miss her dearly.

With sincere sympathy,
Vicki W. Konzen###imported-begin##Vicki Wilson
Konzen###imported-end##

February 23, 2009 at 11:18 AM



“ Dearest family,
I will ALWAYS have the BEST memories about my 'second-family...'
I am blessed to have grown up with the Berry family. There are so
many fun memories and wonderful times I had with you ALL at 213
Elm Street.
Vern & Margaret...you will be missed.
Love
Crystal##imported-begin##Crystal Johnson-Overhuel##imported-
end##

February 22, 2009 at 06:57 PM



“ I first met Margaret in 1968 when we were both interviewing for teaching positions at Continuing Education for Young Families. We worked together for 10+ years and I appreciated Margaret’s wisdom, common sense and knowledge. She had an innate ability to respect and validate everyone’s life and she believed in her students ability to grow, develop, and learn, that also included inexperienced new teachers.

For 30 more years Margaret and I remained friends, visiting, discussing, debating, and watching a great many movies. Whenever I had a question I knew I could call whether cooking, sewing, gardening, current events, government, cultural mores, angst, or sentence structure. Margaret’s breadth of knowledge was amazing and her hope for the future was never diminished.

I was fortunate to have been able to spend much time in the kitchen on Elm Street with Margaret and her family, good food, coffee, and a good many dogs and cats. Margaret was full of love for her children and granddaughters and proud of their many and varied accomplishments. She could and would relate very fond and wonderful stories of her family of origin and their Scottish heritage.

I shall treasure the memories I have and I shall miss you very much Margaret.

Karen##imported-begin##Karen Leys##imported-end##

February 21, 2009 at 04:30 AM



“ *To the Berry family:
I extend my sympathies to all of the Berrys. The great times, the air filled with music, the warmth of your wonderful family; we all will have these enduring memories and continual caring thoughts for you. The Berry House on Elm Street - can't beat it!*

*Sincerely,
Mark Sahlgren##imported-begin##Mark Sahlgren##imported-end##*

February 20, 2009 at 09:53 PM



“ *Dearest Joanie, Meg, Tommy, Mimi and Chris. We are so sorry for your loss-but what a good mother you had. You are so fortunate to have such wonderful memories to cherish. We haven't been in touch so much of late-but we too will miss her and cherish our memories. Love, Barb and Wally##imported-begin##Barbara and Walt Johnson##imported-end##*

February 20, 2009 at 08:53 PM