

Hildegard Breed 1933-2018-Waterbury VT



Hildegard Breed, 84, of Waterbury died Nov. 17, 2018. She was born Dec. 27, 1933, in Stockach, Germany, first child of Eugen and Elisabeth Heberle.

She was a kind and steadfast person. She had strong morals and was a self-sufficient woman by the standards of her generation.

Hildegard immigrated to America in 1956 at age 23 and married Gordon Breed, previously an American GI stationed in Heidelberg, West Germany. She was married to Gordon for 35 years and raised four children born within six years of one another.

She loved America and eventually became a U.S. citizen, and was also proud of her German heritage. She lived the majority of her adult life in New Jersey and Wisconsin.

Her greatest love was her children. She worked very hard to assure good lives for her kids. She was also enthusiastic about gardening, singing classical music, playing the piano, and sewing.

During the New Jersey years she sang in the Masterwork Choir in New York City, which performed several times each year, often in Carnegie Hall.

She was a talented linguist, having command of five languages at her peak. Her knowledge of language came in quite handy for all the children while doing homework, as she knew grammar and language better than the teachers.

Though having few recreational opportunities as a child, as Mom she gamely went along with the energetic activities of her family, which sometimes involved a significant ordeal. As an example, with enthusiasm, she cross-country skied the annual 55-kilometer Birkebeiner ski race in northern Wisconsin for five years. She participated in many family camping trips and ski trips, and was the one to whom the organizing responsibilities always fell.

She loved to cultivate new varieties of many plants, including hostas, in her garden. She would often give the neighbors cuttings of her beautiful plants.

She provided loving stability not so much by outpouring of emotion, but instead by a strong foundation of concern, and work ethic. She never tried to do harm, nor spoke badly of another. She was never overburdened by excessive rigidity, but also held a clear view of right and wrong. As an example, she particularly deplored discrimination. Her equality beliefs significantly influenced her two daughters, who both became engineers.

Hildegard was born the year Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany. She was the oldest of four children, was 5 years old when World War II began, and 11 when it ended. The war had a major influence on her life, and she wrote a personal account of her experiences and observations from her early life in Germany.

Like almost all German men, her father was required to fight in the war. He was an opponent of the Nazis. Hildegard's writings detail her father's resistant and covert activities both before and during the war. These writings are a prized legacy for her descendants.

Hildegard lived the final four years of her life in Waterbury, near her eldest daughter. She loved Vermont's beauty. It was reminiscent to her of her childhood in the Black Forest in southern Germany.

She is survived by three siblings, four children, and seven grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to Living-Unlimited (living-unlimited.org; please enter "In memory of Hildegard Breed"), whose mission is to develop wonderful residential communities for developmentally disabled adults. Hildegard's grandson will be residing at one of those communities.