



On March 15, 2021, Mary Katherine Stone of Onekama left this life at ninety-five years of age. Born August 7, 1925 in Syracuse, NY to Frank John and Esther Sax Schmitt, descendants of German immigrants to the area, she was educated at The Convent School for Girls by the Sisters of St. Francis. Mary Katherine attended City Normal School of Syracuse, NY and obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Education and Library Science cum laude from Syracuse University.

Married on June 22, 1946 to Donald Schwing, a medical student in The Army Specialist Training Program, Mary became the mother of his eight children, who, with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, survive her: Jan/Joseph Parvin: Max Thornburgh and Rudi & Soni Thornburgh; Eric/Shirley (Kubanek): Audrey, Jessica & Tim Hagan, Valerie & Eric Heck; Carol: Joseph Schwing Handlos, Thomas Schwing Handlos; Donna/Paul Szilvagy: Monica & daughter Violeta, Eva/Gorman Christian & daughters Guinevere, Josephine & Ramona, Natalie & Michael Logli; Mark/Patricia (Angell): Malia, Nina, Kathryn & Brian Rose and son Cyrus; Sue Miller: Matthew, Eileen and Rebecca; Teresa/Michael Maier; Esther/Michael Scarbrough: Michael, Rachel and son Sergio Roque. Mary is deeply missed by her cousin Ann Estes Allman Goodman, who, with her paternal aunt Anna Schmitt Estes' other children, grew up with Mary Katherine in a close extended family environment in Syracuse.

Her brother George Sax Schmitt, six years Mary's junior, predeceased her in 2005, Donald Schwing in 2020. After happy times together, Mary lost her second husband, William Howard Hanson in 1992 and her third husband, Ford Elijah Stone, in 2009. Her step-children and their families, William Hanson, jr., Ted Hanson, Toni, Holly and Debra Dahlquist, Beverly (Buzzie)Aust and Mary Jean Fatchett, remember Mary fondly as a supportive friend.

A musical child from a musical family, Mary studied the piano under the tutelage of her mother, and accompanied her brother at family gatherings and recitals. Her own children slipped into dreamland as their mother played, Chopin, perhaps, on her concert grand piano even after she herself had dropped off to sleep a time or two as she faithfully read them their bedtime story. Mary loved classical music and opera, "La Bohème" being her favorite, and she adored the Three Tenors. She sang in the Community Choir and participated in local productions of "Most Happy Fella" and other musical offerings at Ramsdell Theatre. Mary and husband Bill Hanson continued his tradition of service to the Civic Players and the theatre, lending their time and effort over the course of many years to this endeavor. The "Barrymore Bessies" women's group read and discussed dramatic works, a great pleasure to her. Literacy and literature were enduring loves; Mary volunteered for many years tutoring adults in reading skills, was an active member of The American Association of University Women, Manistee Chapter, and worked as Reference Librarian at the Manistee Public Library after her children were grown.

Physically active (well, she chased after eight children!), Mary, especially with husband Stoney, loved a good game of tennis and aspired with some success to be "feared at the net". She played enthusiastically for many years with her women's tennis league. Mary hit the slopes

weekly during the winter, and mourned the loss of her downhill ski runs, which she was forced to abandon only at the age of eighty-two. She loved dance exercise and watched "Dancing with the Stars" with delight, reliving a girlhood fantasy of pirouetting on the stage.

Mary welcomed family and friends from all over the world into her home, first in Manistee, later at her little stone cottage on Portage Lake. Several exchange students, Gisela Schotten Draeger from Germany and Maria Fanny Cartes Ujevic of Chile among them, consider her their "American mother"; they remain a valued part of the "family" to this day. Her travels in later life allowed her to experience directly a wider world which previously had come to her.

A life so long, so engaged and so well-lived defies efforts to concentrate its qualities in a limited space; let us say that those who knew Mary Katherine Schmitt Schwing Hanson Stone knew her as a cultivated woman, graceful and reserved, a person who did not complain, was neither self-indulgent nor self-promoting, who labored from dawn into the night to care for her home and her family, who faced adversity with extraordinary physical and moral courage: an outstanding example of unwavering loyalty and love.

Private services will honor the life and memory of Mary Katherine Stone née Schmitt.

Charitable donations may be made to:

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