

Blake, Jane Hendershot 2012

Jane Hendershot Blake of Pittsfield passed away on Saturday, March 24th, on the eve of her 85th birthday surrounded by her family, and under the loving care of Providence Care Center of Lenox, following a brief battle with lung cancer. Born in West Hartford, Conn., Jane was the younger daughter of Lewis and Margie Hendershot. Her family moved to Pittsfield in 1933 when her father joined Berkshire Life Insurance Company. She grew up in her beloved Pittsfield, and was always proud to have attended the one-room Morewood School; Plunkett School; and Pittsfield High school, graduating in 1945. She was integrally involved in planning frequent Class of '45 reunions. Jane also attended Skidmore College. On March 28, 1950, Jane married William Leonard Blake. They spent their married life in Columbus, Cincinnati and Hudson, OH and together raised three children. After they divorced, Jane returned to her Pittsfield family home in 1970 to help care for her mother. She lived the rest of her life in the home she loved, caring for the gardens, mowing the lawn, and hosting frequent parties, especially during the Christmas season. In December last year, she delighted in throwing a 100th birthday party for her house. A lover of local history, she was a frequent contributor of details to the Berkshire Eagle. She looked forward to reading the paper each morning and, while in her 70's, she tired of having to wait for it to be delivered. She took matters into her own hands and took on the paper route in her neighborhood, pulling a wheeled trashcan behind her and wearing ice grippers for sure footing. Jane was a founding member of the Pittsfield Garden Tour, a board member of the Berkshire Art Association, and an active member of Junior League, the Berkshire County Historical Society, and the College Club. She enjoyed art, theater and travel, and loved dogs "more than most people." In her later years, Jane eagerly worked through her personal bucket list, traveling to Paris with her two daughters, walking across the Brooklyn Bridge and the newly-opened Walkway Over The Hudson, and visiting the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, N.C. Jane was predeceased by her sister, Eloise Lennox, who died in 2006, and her former husband and good friend Bill Blake, who died in 2011. She is survived by her three children and their families: Lisa Griffis of Montgomery, Texas and her daughter Megan and son Kevin; Leslie and Peter Reed of Windsor and their daughter Kathryn; and Jonathan Blake and Holly Killary of Salisbury, Vt. and their children Candra Gerrick and Duncan Rollason, and two great-grandchildren; as well as her niece Bonnie Williams and nephew George C. Lennox III. Jane was a member of the First Church of Christ Congregational. A private memorial celebration of Jane's life will be held later in the spring by her family. Memorial donations in Jane's name can be made to the Pittsfield Garden Tour, PO Box 1034, Pittsfield, MA 01201; or to the Berkshire Humane Society, 214 Barker Road, Pittsfield, MA 01201. The DERY FUNERAL HOME is in charge of arrangements.

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