



Doris Blair

August 3, 1923 - June 29, 2014

Doris Blair, age 90, of Glen Arbor MI, passed away the afternoon of 29 Jun 2014, and the world lost a very kind and gentle soul. She was born in Hartford CT on 03 Aug 1923 to Mabel (Ward) Keffer and Ralph Keffer. She married Francis Austen Blair in Chicago IL on 30 May 1953, and he preceded her in death on 06 Aug 1988. She is survived by her sister Eleanor Keffer Dornon, her five children, Joy Anne Blair (Jane Greiner), Thomas Austen Blair (Anne Wrigley Dale Blair), Elizabeth Jane Blair (Gary Stair), Benjamin Ralph Blair (Cindy Kalberer Blair), and Timothy Ward Blair (Sheena Chen), and her seven grandsons Jacob (Kelly), Devon (Casey), Taylor (Sarah), Benjamin (Ashley), Philip (Kate), Nathan (Amanda), and Brian.

Doris received her Bachelor's degree in Chemistry from Miami University in 1945, and then worked for several years in color photo chemistry at Kodak in Rochester NY. She completed a Master's degree in Social Work at Haverford College in 1951, then moved to Chicago to work for the American Friends Service Committee. Doris was living in Chicago when she met and married Frank Blair. Doris and Frank moved from Chicago to Lafayette IN in 1955, and then later onto a small farm outside Lafayette to raise their family. The family had a big vegetable garden, and here Doris, a city girl, learned about preparing and canning the garden produce. She gave her children an appreciation for books by reading to them when they were younger and then later taking them each Saturday to the county library. Doris returned to chemistry as a lab technician at Purdue University's Animal Sciences Department in 1965, working there for some 27 years until her retirement in 1988. Regarding her return to chemistry after a fifteen year hiatus, Doris later quipped "When I started at Purdue I wasn't sure I remembered the difference between an acid and a base!" Nevertheless, she quickly got back into it, and enjoyed working with Dr. Ralph Erb and other researchers studying endocrinology in farm animals. After Frank died in 1988, Doris and Joy, her eldest daughter and caregiver, started new adventures together. They camped and traveled the American southwest, the Rocky Mountains, and revisited the New England of her childhood; they also made numerous visits to grandchildren in Georgia, Chicago, and California. Doris also enjoyed international travel with daughter Betsy, visiting her son Tim in Cameroon in 1989, and then attending Tim's wedding in Taiwan in 1996. When Joy moved to Glen Arbor to live in the beauty of Sleeping Bear

Dunes, Doris joined her. She said, "I have always wanted to live in the woods." Doris' quiet, loving, accepting presence, and deep belief in the goodness of people, will be missed by family and friends.

The family will have a celebration of Doris's life when her ashes are interred in the family cemetery at Hiram, Ohio. Contributions in lieu of flowers can be made to The Leelanau Conservancy or to Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes. Memories and condolences may be left at Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral & Cremation Services Traverse City, MI, <http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com>.

Comments



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Dear Joy, Tom, Tim, Ben and Betsy,

So very very sorry to hear about Doris. She was such a lovely and saintly soul she will be greatly missed. I was surprised to read about her past history - there was so much I didn't know, especially her involvement with chemistry. I guess with so many loud Blair's around the lovely violet was in the shadow of the Oak tree. And of course I never saw her at work so always thought of her as a stay at home mom. It must have been a big shift for her to drop her career and start being a mom living on the farm raising you guys.

Joy I was so glad we were able to visit with you Doris and June a few years back. It was a special time and Willa and I often still talk about it especially when we are traveling. As great as North Manitou and Sleeping Bear Dunes are, the top of the list was staying with you, and camping right next to the lake. We want to come back for another visit.

Bless Doris and you and June for taking such excellent care of her over these past many years.

Much love, Nick, Tonia, Tania, Willa, and Stefan

Nicholas Blair - July 04, 2014 at 06:59 AM