

## Half Staff – Marion A. Harding

October 22, 2020



Marion Arnold Harding, 84, of Rockport, passed away peacefully at home of complications from Parkinson's Disease on Thursday, October 22, 2020, surrounded by family and enfolded in love.

Marion was born January 24, 1936, in Newton, Mass., to Margaret Woessner Arnold and John Kappeler Arnold. Raised in Rockport, Marion attended Rockport schools and graduated from Gloucester High School in 1954. Marion received her B.A. in Art History in 1958 from Wheaton College in Norton, Mass.

After graduating from college, Marion worked in the Education Department of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. She married Lawrence B. (Larry) Harding, her high school sweetheart, in 1960, and moved with him to Philadelphia. There she continued her career at the Philadelphia Museum of Art while Larry completed his undergraduate degree at the Wharton School,

University of Pennsylvania.

Marion and Larry moved back to Cape Ann after his graduation, and soon started their family. They raised their children in Marion's family home on South Street in Rockport. Marion was an active community volunteer participating in the PTO, the American Red Cross, and the Rockport Garden Club, among many others. She was a communicant of St. Mary's Episcopal Church on Broadway where she was a member of the Altar Guild and served as Director for many years. She also coordinated the bake table for the Christmas Fair, helped with rummage sales, and was a church sitter. After raising her children, Marion worked for the Cape Ann Museum, combining her love of art with her knowledge of Cape Ann.

Marion was warm, smart, curious, and funny. She loved crossword puzzles, cards, and a vodka tonic with a slice of lime. She knitted beautiful sweaters, every stitch perfect. With Larry, she skied, traveled the world, cooked gourmet meals, and loved to jitterbug. She whistled sea shanties while she did the dishes and she loved chickadees and cardinals.

She was a caretaker to people, plants, animals, and places. She made her home a busy hub, filled with Christmas cactuses, Siamese cats, dogs, and the comings and goings of kids, family, and close friends. Eventually, grandchildren joined the mix, and for them she became a dresser-upper and tea party hostess par excellence.

She was a gentle and patient soul. Marion nursed her mother, Margaret, through her final illness until her death in 1998, and cared with similar devotion for her husband Larry, who passed away in 2000. In that same spirit, her children and grandchildren-particularly her daughters Tammy and Betsy-cared for Marion in the final months, weeks, and days of her life. At home and at peace, she passed away in the embrace of her family.

Marion is survived by her daughter, Tamsen Endicott and her husband, Dominic, of Gloucester;

her daughter, Elizabeth Harding of Beverly; and her son, David B. Harding and his wife, Kaethe, of Rockport. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Rebecca Endicott and her husband, Luke Gehorsam of Chatham, N.Y.; Sarah Flanagan of Beverly; Julia Endicott of Denver, Colo.; Marion Flanagan of Somerville; Nicholas Endicott of Gloucester; and Jack Harding of Rockport. Additionally, she is survived by her brother, David P. Arnold and his wife, Barbara, of Rockport; her brother-in-law Bob Hull of Gloucester; her brother-in-law Dick Harding and his wife, Doris, of Palm Harbor, Fla.; her sister-in-law Evelyn Arnold of Buxton, Maine; and many loving nieces, nephews, and extended family. She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Lawrence B. Harding; and her dear brother, John K. Arnold Jr.; her brother-in-law, E. Scott Harding; and her cherished sister-in-law, Anne E. Hull.

Il of those who knew Marion and had the privilege to call her mother, sister, auntie, Mimi, or friend will love and miss her always. The family would like to thank Tessa MacNeil, Mom's wonderful caregiver, and all of the nurses and staff of Care Dimensions whose support was so appreciated at the end.

Memorial gifts in Marion's name may be given to St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 24 Broadway, Rockport, Care Dimensions, 75 Sylvan Street, Danvers, MA 01923, or to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. A memorial service will be held in the future on a date to be announced. Arrangements by the Greely Funeral Home, 212 Washington Street, Gloucester. For online guestbook, please visit [www.greelyfuneralhome.com](http://www.greelyfuneralhome.com)