



Sheila Margaret Graves

January 4, 1938 - April 8, 2011

Sheila Margaret Graves, a longtime resident of Wenatchee, passed away on April 8, 2011, at her home, surrounded by her five children. She was born January 4, 1938, in Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, England. During WWII, she experienced the nightly air-raid sirens and bombings of her home town, and wore the children's siren suit each night as she went into the neighborhood bomb shelter. An only child, she immigrated to the United States in 1949, with her parents, Wynn and Joseph Kavanagh, traveling from England to America on the R.M.S. Queen Mary. They were sponsored by a family in Spokane, WA, where they settled until Sheila was married in 1958 to Robert Graves. Sheila attended Mary Cliff High School and later Gonzaga University, where she studied music and Creative Writing. In 1974, she joined the staff of The Wenatchee World Newspaper, where she started as a 'Girl Friday,' filing papers and working with the news archives. She later became a feature writer in the newsroom, writing stories, including everything from 'Dog of the Week' to interviews on local events and people, and visiting celebrities. Sheila received several Associated Press awards over the years for her excellence in Journalism. In addition to her journalism life, she was an accomplished performer, specifically as a singer and actress with the Wenatchee Music Theater program. Most memorably, she played Eliza in 'My Fair Lady' and Golde in 'Fiddler on the Roof' in the annual Apple Blossom Musical Theater productions. She remained active with Music Theater, playing various roles, working on programs and assisting with fund-raising. Since retirement from the newspaper, Sheila maintained an active schedule as a box-office volunteer for the Wenatchee Performing Arts Center and usher for countless shows and visiting productions. She also served as a volunteer for Respite Care, held at Grace Lutheran Church for several years. Sheila was a board member for the Robert Graves Gallery, and served as a Docent for the gallery each week. In addition to her active role in the community, Sheila enjoyed writing, reading, art, crossword puzzles, playing the piano, scrabble and she had a passion for humor and jokes. Sheila was a regular at Sassy's Diner, where she enjoyed breakfast and reading the paper. She loved spending time with her children and grandchildren, and enjoyed travel and old movies.

Sheila is survived by her children, Jody Graves (Fred Manhart, husband), Paul Graves

(Becky Graves, wife), Mary Shemaria (Mike Shemaria, husband), John Graves and Lisa Fickel (Mark Fickel, husband); and four grandchildren, Hannah, Alyssa, Madelyn and Camden.

A Celebration of Sheila's Life will be held at the Wenatchee Performing Arts Center on Sunday, May 22, 2011, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the main lobby. The family invites you to come and share music, food, stories and memories. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Wenatchee Performing Arts Center. Arrangements are assisted by Telford's Chapel of the Valley, East Wenatchee.

We remember our mom as a vibrant, interested, talented and funny woman, who touched many lives. We will miss her dearly.

So, in the words of a song we, as her children, heard her singing so many times from 'My Fair Lady':

"All I want is a room somewhere, far away from the cold night air. With one enormous chair, oh wouldn't it be lovely."

We love you, Mom.

Tribute Wall

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“ 15 April 2011. I was saddened to hear, yesterday, of my cousin Sheila's passing. The last time I saw Sheila was in 1976 when we visited while travelling across the continent from Inuvik, NWT. to Gander, Newfoundland via the U.S. I also remember visits to her home in England when we were kids during the war. We lost touch over the years but I do remember her. My condolences to her family and friends. We know what you are going through. Sheila's passing is the fifth in our family in the last forty days.

Dave Shaw - April 15, 2011 at 09:23 AM