



Mary Soltis

September 7, 1929 - May 4, 2015

Mary Eldred Newland was born in Toronto September 7, 1929 to Eldred Lawson McTear and Frank Newland. She joined sister Betty and a beloved twin brother, Bobby.

Mary's family came to Canada in 1830 when great-great grandfather, Hugh Ball, left Dublin's Mountjoy Square for Quebec. Mary descended from the Gage and Leckie families of England and Scotland, that included Anglican clergymen Robert Gage and son John, the former having left Northampton England in the 1600s to attend Trinity College Dublin and undertake Protestant ministry in Northern Ireland. During a 2001 Irish trip, Mary learned of Francophone roots in that "the family of Gage is in the list of those who came to England with William the Conqueror" in 1066. She remained a Canadian throughout her life.

The Newlands lived in Toronto where Mary's father owned the Embassy Hotel and her mother served many organizations in a volunteer capacity. The family belonged to St. Clements Anglican Church, where Mary was baptized and confirmed. She graduated from St. Clements School '48 and began her long and varied volunteer resume by serving as the school's Red Cross representative. Mary was in the class of 1951 at University of Toronto and a member of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority. She spent every childhood summer in Barrie, Ontario, where the family cottage had been established in 1925.

In 1951, Mary and her red Ford convertible began a new chapter when she became a stewardess for American Airlines (AA). She was among an early group of Canadian women recruited by AA for its Buffalo hub. Her career included temporary duty to open Dallas's Love Field and working the non-stop coast-to-coast NY to LA flight.

At Snyder's Campus Manor, she lived across the hall from William Soltis, a USAF pilot, stationed at Niagara Falls AFB. They married in 1954, welcomed son Michael in 1955, Andrea in 1956 and then enjoyed military postings in Alaska (3 years), Florida, Michigan, and lastly, Massachusetts, where Linda was born in 1962.

After Bill's 1963 retirement, they settled in Wheatfield on 5 acres. Active at North Presbyterian Church for 5 decades, Mary was on the session, a

deacon, trustee, member of building & grounds, finance and nominating committees, longtime secretary of the Naomi-Dorcas Circle. In the 1980s, Mary actively embraced the church's sponsorship of a Laotian refugee boat family, helping them find housing, and assisting with day to day family life including rides, babysitting, shopping and acclimation. Mary also took on "behind the scenes" tasks such as church librarian, flower chair, cook for the Junior Mission Club neighborhood ministry, even bringing fresh produce from her vegetable garden. She regularly populated the Church's mitten tree with her handmade mittens. Mary was active with Church Women United of the Tonawandas and was its longtime historian.

Mary was a 20+ year member of Coterie Inc. as ticket chair, board member and president. She raised money for the American Heart and Cancer Association, even canvassing the neighborhood for donations. As a parent, she was Boy Scout den mother, 4-H Mom, assistant brownie leader, Girl Scout cookie chair, and elementary school head room mother. Informally, she was was the parent that regularly transported neighborhood children to the public library.

Throughout her life, Mary spent summers at the Newland family cottage Barrie ON, enjoying daily swims and reconnecting with childhood friends. She was known for her profound love and affection for animals, a gift she passed on to

her children and grandchildren.

Mary is predeceased by her parents, twin Robert, who died in 1963, a pedestrian hit by a car in Toronto, daughter Andrea, who died of cancer in 1992 and husband, Major William Soltis who died in 2013. She is survived by son Michael and his wife Kelly, daughter Linda Lee Newland and her beloved grandchildren, Samantha and John.

Mary died on May 4, 2015 and her cremains will be buried at the cottage in Barrie, Ontario.

Soltis - Mary Eldred Newland

May 4, 2015, age 85, predeceased by parents, Eldred & Frank Newland and twin Robert of Toronto, husband Major Wm Soltis, USAF, daughter Andrea, survived by children Michael (Kelly), Linda, grandchildren Samantha and John. Memorial service is May 11, 4 pm, North Presbyterian Church, 168 Payne Avenue, N. Tonawanda. Donations can be made to the church. Share online condolences at www.wattengel.com

PDF Printable Version

Tribute Wall

EH

“ Dear Linda and family, I am so sorry for your loss. I am sending love.

Eva Hassett

Eva Hassett - May 11, 2015 at 12:00 AM

ES

“ Dear Linda... Going back so MANY years, you and my daughter Nancy were good friends. I remember you very well and so does she. Strange, but she came in from her home in California Thursday evening and we headed out to see her new grandson (my great) on Friday morn, home today. I now live around the corner from your homestead...don't know your address but want to give you a hug and condolences on the passing of your mom just before Mother's Day.. may your memories, now treasures, and faith in God, help sustain you. Memories are so important to life!!! Love, Nancy & Esther Stoeckel

Esther Stoeckel - May 11, 2015 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ Lyse Moreau has sent this Expressions of Sympathy card.

Lyse Moreau - May 10, 2015 at 12:00 AM