



## Doreen Edith Marjoram

February 25, 2021

Doreen Edith Marjoram, 98, departed for Heaven on Thursday, February 25, 2021, from her home at Fox Meadows in Fort Collins, Colorado. She was born in the seaside village of Southend-on-Sea, England, to Gertrude and Arthur Maskell. Doreen, who was the oldest of five, had three sisters, Marjorie, Cecilia and Muriel, and a brother, Arthur.

Doreen often recalled cherished memories of her summers spent on the beaches with her family, going to country markets and visiting her beloved grandmother in the coastal village of Thorpe Bay. She especially treasured her Sunday morning walks with her dad on the mile-long Southend-on-Sea Pier.

Her idyllic childhood and young adulthood, came to an abrupt end in 1939 when Germany bombed the English coast. Doreen's dad moved the family to London believing that the Germans wouldn't make it to the city. He was proven wrong as Doreen attests to in one of her journal entries:

"How wrong he was! The bombing started that day and night, and never stopped..." She also sheds light on what life was like in London: "Food was so scarce. We got very little on our rations. I was 17 years old and had to go and help make munitions in a factory. It was your duty if you were young and single."

A few years later, Doreen's childhood friend, Stanley Marjoram, reappeared in her life when they both worked at the factory making parts for the spitfire planes. A romance blossomed and they were married in August 1941. Their daughters, Valerie "Erica" and Sandra Doreen, were both born in England before the family immigrated to South Africa, where they eventually settled in Durban. Durban was a coastal city with beautiful beaches and a holiday atmosphere. This is where Doreen began her dream career as a nursery school teacher. It was a natural choice for her as she was hailed by her siblings as their fun-loving, compassionate protector.

Doreen was grateful for this time in Durban. Her daughters attended excellent schools and enrolled in dancing, elocution and swim lessons, and the family enjoyed quality time together.

This was in sharp contrast to countless nights Doreen had spent in England during the war in air raid shelters with her two young daughters, while Stanley was sequestered in a factory making munitions. She recalled often what it was like to emerge from the shelter each morning, not knowing what to expect.

After many exciting and unforgettable years in South Africa that included going on safari in Kruger National Park, socializing with friends and exploring the magnificent coastline from Durban to Cape Town, Doreen and her family decided to emigrate from South Africa to California in 1961 due to growing political unrest.

Stan arrived in Southern California ahead of Doreen and their daughters. He settled temporarily in the small rural farming community of Orange, which was filled with a lovely citrus fragrance emanating from the numerous orange groves surrounding it. He spent the next few months getting established and securing a job. Six months later Doreen, Erica and Sandra boarded a ship, the Italian liner Europa, in Durban and set off on a journey of a lifetime.

They sailed north around the Horn of Africa, through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal and into the Mediterranean Sea. Doreen, Erica and Sandra spent a week touring Egypt, which included exploring the Pyramids on camels. Their adventures continued with excursions to Italy, Switzerland and France. They eventually boarded another luxury ship and crossed the Atlantic on a three-week ocean voyage to New York City. The last leg of the journey was a road trip to Southern California on a Greyhound bus, which was quite a shock for the three of them after being pampered on cruise ships.

After arriving in California, the family eventually bought a home in Costa Mesa and found a community they enjoyed greatly. Doreen resumed her career as a nursery school teacher and expanded her circle of friends after joining a swimming group. These friends were a part of her life for the next five decades. They travelled to Mexico and throughout California on many enjoyable “girls' trips.” Doreen developed a close relationship with her neighbor, Shirley, and her family, and they were best friends until the day she passed on. Stan and Doreen also enjoyed traveling with friends to Hawaii and regularly visited Erica in Colorado and Sandra in South Africa.

Doreen, who continued living in California after Stan died in 1986, relocated to Fort Collins, Colorado in 2010. She was well acquainted with Fort Collins thanks to her many visits to see Erica. It was during these visits that Doreen, who was in her late 70s and early 80s at the time, learned to water ski on Horsetooth Reservoir, cross country ski in City Park and kayak on Long Pond. Always game for adventure, Doreen was 85 when she made a long and at times, grueling trip to South Africa on her own. The highlights of the trip were stopping in England to spend a week with her beloved niece Carol and her husband Rick and then proceeding to South Africa to enjoy quality time with Sandra and her family.

When Doreen first arrived in Colorado, she resided in the Rigden Farm Senior Community for three years. She enjoyed many social activities, including regular exercise classes, live entertainment, exciting weekly field trips to museums, wineries and ranches. It was here that she developed close relationships with her dear friends, Linda, Deb and her sons, Gabe and Malachi, and continued her close relationship with Sandy, a close family friend. They kept her entertained with many day trips and lunch dates.

Doreen moved to Fox Meadows in 2013 and again developed endearing friendships with the exceptionally caring staff and residents. Her dear friends followed her to Fox Meadows and continued to spend quality time with her. Other special times for Doreen were holiday parties attended through the years with Erica and her “adopted family,” including Janise, Sandy and Steve and Bunny and Mike. Doreen also spent time in Colorado with her grandson Cliff and his wife Nikki and their daughters, Leanne and Rachel.

Anyone fortunate enough to spend time with Doreen knew they were the ones who were truly blessed to be in her presence. Her daughters offer these insightful and touching explanations as to why:

Erica describes her mom as “this incredibly kind, compassionate lady who loved people, parties and animals. She was the original ‘animal whisperer’”. Case in point...I had driven to Nebraska with a friend to pick up a wild horse. After getting the horse situated at my house, I went and picked up my mom so she could see my new horse. I was working around the barn and happened to look up, and there was my mom, in the pen with her arms around the horse’s neck. On the verge of heart failure, I quietly told her to come out of the pen, and why. Her comment, ‘That’s not a wild horse!’ Not at that moment, under her spell, it wasn’t. My mom was always in awe of God’s natural creations, especially the clouds and trees in Colorado. Going on road trips with her in the

south of England, to the game reserves in South Africa, to the Black Hills of South Dakota and the coast of California was always like being accompanied by a private naturalist. How blessed I am to have had the privilege of calling her MOM...She was a gracious British lady whom her friend, Julie, so aptly described as 'a dear friend with a vibrant spirit.' My mom was the first to acknowledge that she had enjoyed a wonderful life, full of adventures, and was always grateful for the kind, caring friends she had made through the years."

Sandra elaborates on Doreen's love of God's gifts:

"Whenever I think of my mom, I automatically think of the Kruger National Park. That was one of her most favorite places on earth, and mine, too. Every time she came to South Africa on holiday, we never missed going to the Kruger. We'd arrive, and it was like we were entering a different world, one that made you really believe that there is a God up there, and he had invited us into the Bush to renew our souls. No traffic, no city noises, just the absolute beauty of the African Bushveld. We would get up early in camp, a quick breakfast, into the car, and out into the bush to see what we would be privileged to see that day. It might be a majestic lion, an elegant giraffe, or just an unusual bird. But, no matter what we saw, it was truly inspiring. We would have our picnic lunch at a hide overlooking a waterhole and watch the elephants having a wonderful time in the water. Back to the camp, and watch the sun go down with an ice cold gin and tonic.

Over the last few years, I have truly missed those trips to the Kruger with my mom, but when I go with friends, we always have a gin and tonic and toast her."

In addition to her beloved daughters, Erica and Sandra, Doreen is survived by: granddaughter Nikki (John); her grandsons Jim and Cliff (Nikki); her greatgrandchildren, Cooper, Denham, Lily, Leanne and Rachel; her nieces Jody (Rick) and Carol (Rick); and her nephew John (Martine). Doreen was

predeceased by her parents, four siblings and husband. Doreen also leaves behind several treasured friends and her beloved cat, Blackie.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Doreen Edith Marjoram*

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