

DEXTER, MARY JANE

W'40

(November 19, 1923 - August 21, 2017)

Wolcott-Mary Jane MacCleave Dexter of Wolcott, Vermont, died peacefully at her home in Wolcott where she had lived most of her years since 1950. She was born in Brockton, MA, in November, 1923, the daughter of Marguary Cochran MacCleave and Howard Maxwell MacCleave and sister of Howard Maxwell MacCleave, all who predeceased her. She is survived by loving nephews and nieces and cousins, many friends and a number of interesting godchildren.

Mary Jane attended Thayer Academy, Braintree, MA, class of 1941, then class of 1941-1943 at Skidmore, graduating from the University of New Hampshire, cum laude, in 1945. She was a social worker and camp director at the North Bennett Street Industrial School in Boston. During WW II she was a welder at the Foreriver Shipyard in Quincy, MA. From 1953-1968 she taught in the English Department at Eaglebrook School in Deerfield, MA, then at Hackley School in Tarrytown, NY. Her last full-time teaching job was at Rumson County Day School in New Jersey.

Mary Jane married William Gregory Dexter on August 2, 1961 and their busy life together began. They shared great enthusiasm for education and loved children and learning. M.J. was also committed to community service. She volunteered on the Health Center Board in New Jersey, on the Wolcott Planning Commission of Civil Authority, on the Board of the Glee Merritt Kelly Community Library, serving as president of the Board, and served with Out and About in her area. She was a Girl Scout leader and a coach for the Special Olympics. Faithful to her favorite West Hill area, she held various offices in town and was active in the Historical Society for years. Her sincere effort in education was quite evident; she will continue giving college scholarships, even now.

She and Bill traveled a great deal and enjoyed exploring, hiking, skiing and gardening. M.J. took her first trek in Nepal at age 70 with her dear friend, Baily. Bill was a bicycle man and crossed the U.S. twice with students, camping along the way.

Ever fun-loving, she adopted her husband's passion in the local Vermont Automobile Club for antique cars. They were keen members of the National Woodie Club and the Early Ford V-8 Club. Locally, they were members of the Northern Rivers Land Trust. St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church was important to M.J. She served as Senior Warden and on the altar guild and was also a vestry member.

Bill died in 1991. M.J. continued to live at West Hill with her golden retriever, Molly. Bill and M.J. will be on their favorite sweet slopes of West Hill.

The Service of Remembrance will take place on Saturday, September 9, 2017 at 11 a.m. at St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church at 39 West Church Street in Hardwick, VT. Contributions in Mary Jane's memory may be made to the Lamoille Area Cancer Network, 198 Farr Avenue, Morrisville, VT 05661 or to the local chapter of the American Cancer Society.