

Marilyn Hoopes McKeown

May 30, 1925 - April 2, 2021



Marilyn was born in Philadelphia, PA on May 30th 1925 to Pearl and Raymond T. Hoopes. She had three siblings, Janet, Caroline, and Ray. The family moved to Lansdowne, PA when Marilyn was 10 years old and she lived there until graduating from high school. Her father told her that if she wanted to pursue her interests in math and science she should learn to type so she could be a scientific secretary. She told him she was not interested in being a secretary so he agreed to pay tuition to attend Wellesley College where she majored in Physics. After graduation in 1947, she immediately got a job at the Brookhaven National Lab (BNL). It was an unusual opportunity for a woman with a science background to join a government-funded lab. Her 1st position was in the Applied Science department where she built Geiger counters to detect radiation. It was at BNL that Marilyn met her future husband, Michael. They were married in 1949 and purchased property on Mott Lane in Brookhaven where they built their family home. Mike and Marilyn raised their four daughters there and lived in the house for 60 years.

Marilyn was passionate about life and lived everyday to the fullest. Without a doubt she was a trailblazer who chose her own path in her career, her family, and her commitment to the community and her church. She made a lifelong commitment to the Bellport Methodist Church in 1947. She served on various committees at the church, taught Sunday School, was the

Treasurer for many years and participated in the handbell choir. She helped create a Daycare center, a Thrift Store, and an annex to the church.

Marilyn's passion for lifelong learning was exemplified in her completion of two Master's degrees: one in Physics from the University of Illinois and a second in Math from Stony Brook University that she completed while working full-time at BNL. At Brookhaven, she went on to do scientific programming for physics. She was a role model to many women at the Lab and encouraged her daughters to pursue their dreams through education as well.

She and Mike lived an active outdoor life raising their daughters on the waters of Bellport Bay sailing aboard their beloved ketch, *FLYING CLOUD*, that Mike built in 1962. They enjoyed numerous family sailing trips and vacations on Fire Island. They bought a truck camper and took camping, hiking, and skiing trips. Marilyn became a Girl Scout Leader and loved the hiking, camping, kayaking and outdoor activities. She played tennis and bridge with local friends and took up a new passion in her 50s when she started running.

Marilyn joined a group of women at BNL who started running after hours for exercise. Over time, they began to participate in short fun races or half-marathons and eventually inspired each other to take on a full marathon. At one half-marathon sponsored by L'Eggs pantyhouse she loved the T-shirts which said "Who says women can't run the world?" She ran her 1st marathon in 1988 at the age of 63 with her group of running friends. She would say "to finish, no matter how, is to win". She completed four NYC marathons in her life: 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994 respectively and created a lifelong group of running friends who she kept in touch with.

Marilyn was widowed in 2013 when Mike died and she moved to Jefferson's Ferry Retirement Community. She continued to live an active life playing bridge, serving on the Environmental Committee and attending League of Women Voters activities.

Despite Marilyn's many extra-curricular activities, she was passionate about her four daughters and adored her three granddaughters, her great-granddaughter and finally a great-grandson who was born two days before she died. She was always positive and upbeat and told her daughters at the end of her life to rejoice in everything they shared as a family.

Marilyn died peacefully at her daughter's home in East Hampton on April 2nd, 2021. She is survived by her daughters, Kathleen McKeown (David Cooper) of East Hampton, NY, Christine McKeown Burry (William Burry) of Mathews, VA, and Carol Ann McKeown (Rick Cole) of Los Gatos, CA; grandchildren Elizabeth Cooper Cohan (Rob Cohan) of Possum, NJ, Elena Cooper (Phil Crossman) of New York, NY, and Amy Kim Cooper (Ben Evans) of Framingham, MA; and great-grandchildren Kayleigh Cooper Cohan and Quincy Carter Cohan. She was predeceased by her daughter, Mary Kim McKeown, and her husband, Michael McKeown.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Bellport United Methodist Church, PO Box 460, 185 South Country Rd, Bellport, NY 11713 or to the Boys and Girls Club of Bellport. The family will hold a Celebration of Life once COVID restrictions permit.