



Mrs. Jeanette Hotchkiss

September 18, 1919 - January 26, 2020

Jeanette Hotchkiss died on Sunday, January 26, 2020, at Pleasant Bay Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Brewster, Massachusetts. She was 100 years old.

Jeanette was born on September 18, 1919, in Phoenix, New York, the youngest of eight children born to Daniel Webster Robinson and Ella Louis (Moore) Robinson. Soon afterward, the family moved to Syracuse, where her parents opened a popular bakery. While Jeanette was still a girl, they moved into a house her father built in nearby Howlett Hill, a place that figured prominently in her stories about childhood.

She graduated from Marcellus High School, Class of 1937, then enrolled at Plattsburgh State University, where she was part of the then-new four-year program offered to future home economics teachers. Her student-teacher placement took her to Chateaugay, New York, where she met John Grant Hotchkiss, the town's high school industrial arts teacher. By the time she received her bachelor's degree in 1941, the couple were engaged. John joined the U.S. Army, and his prewar postings took him to Hawaii as well as several stateside bases, but when the United States formally entered World War II in 1942, he was sent to Europe to direct a transportation unit until the war's end.

During her fiancé's absence, Jeanette taught home economics in northern New York public high schools in Westport, then Copenhagen. When John returned, she "retired" from teaching, they were married, and the newlyweds returned to Chateaugay, where John resumed teaching at Chateaugay Central School. A couple of years later, the owner of the boarding house where the couple met offered to see her Main Street home to them. They purchased it immediately and lived there for 52 years, during which they raised two sons: John Charles (born 1947) and Brian David (1953).

John and Jeanette left their marks on the Town of Chateaugay and on the North Country in general. For nearly 40 years they operated Hotchkiss Interiors, an interior design studio. In 1967, Jeanette returned to Chateaugay Central School, this time as its school library media specialist. To obtain her New York State certification, she devoted the following five summers to graduate studies in library sciences at the University of Vermont (UVM) in Burlington. In 1983, she retired from her school post and three years later was named director of the Chateaugay Memorial Library, a post she held until 2001.

Jeanette was extensively involved in Chateaugay's First Presbyterian Church and also

was a longtime member of the Order of the Eastern Star. She served in a number of North Country leadership roles, the last of which was president of the Franklin County Historical and Museum Society (1990-1997).

Upon moving to Cape Cod in 2001, she was soon involved in volunteer work with several organizations. As a member of the First Congregational Church UCC- a stone's throw from her new home- she sang in the choir and was a member of the Justice and Peace Fellowship. For several years, many community members knew her friendly face from weekly work at the Harwich Council on Aging and even more frequent stints at the Corner Thrift Shop.

Jeanette is survived by her two sons- John C. and his wife, Nancy Clark Hotchkiss of North Adams, Massachusetts and Brian and his husband, Peter Blaiwas of Newburyport, Massachusetts. Also surviving are several nieces, nephews and cousins.

A memorial service will be held at a later date in Chateaugay, New York.

Memorial gifts honoring Jeanette may be given to either the John G. Hotchkiss Historical Collection of the Chateaugay Memorial Library (P.O. Box 10, Chateaugay, NY 12920), or the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society (63 Elm Street, Salisbury, MA 01952).

Cemetery

Eastside Cemetery

Chateaugay, NY,

Comments



“ Jeanette was a lovely, classy smart woman . She was a neighbor and a colleague that elevated everyone she know and the community in general. Both she and John helped the community in so many ways. It was a pleasure to know her.

Jeff Rundell

Jeffrey Rundell - May 14, 2020 at 10:24 PM



“ Bill and Peg Cullen (my Dad and Mom), were long-time friends with Jeanette and John Hotchkiss. For many years, we lived two doors down from the Hotchkiss home, at 59 East Main St (while we were at 55 East Main St., now 205 & 201 East Main resp.).

The Cullens and Hotchkisses frequently shared a cocktail hour together, occasional dinners at home and often at the Knotty Pine Restaurant. Jeanette often impressed a school-age fellow like me with her elegant appearance.

Dad and John worked hard each September and October on staging the Senior Play. Over the years, John created clever stagings for performances such as “Stardust”, “A Double-Barreled Detective Story”, “Arsenic & Old Lace” and “Turn Back The Clock”. I remember visiting Hotchkiss Interiors a lot when I was young, usually shopping for some kid-affordable knick-knack for my parents’ gifts. Jeanette would always be kind and patient with me and my very limited spending allowance, to come up with suggestions of what I might buy. I remember that I always got Dad a “Rooster” tie from the shop for his birthday.

Although the Cullens left Chateaugay in 1964, the friendship with the Hotchkisses did not end with that departure. They planned and made many trips to Montreal, Ottawa and Gananoque for dinner or a stage show. In 1992, for the celebration of my parents’ 50th wedding anniversary, Jeanette and John, together with Geri and me, accompanied Mom and Dad on a ten-day cruise in the Hawaiian Islands. This photo shows the Hotchkisses on the “formal night” commonly scheduled on cruise ships of the era.

Dad joins me in wishing Chuck and Brian well. Best wishes from the Cullen family.

Bill, Jr.



Bill Cullen - May 05, 2020 at 10:09 AM