



Carol Beth Gibbens

May 1, 1944 - October 15, 2025

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Santa Barbara, California

Carol Beth Gibbens of Santa Barbara, California, passed away after an extended illness on October 15, 2025. Carol was known to many for her dedication to her family and friends, love of adventure and travel, and career as a librarian.

The fifth child of Meril and Madge Gibbens, Carol was born on May 1, 1944, in Pueblo, Colorado. She was raised in Durango, Colorado with her five brothers and sisters. Their family was active in the community and attended First Baptist Church. Carol graduated from Durango High School and attended Fort Lewis College where she majored in Southwest Studies.

After graduation from college, Carol relocated to Southern California with her older sister, Roylene, to attend graduate school at the University of Southern California (USC) and remained in California until her death. Carol earned a Master of Library Science from USC and in 1968 began a lifelong career as a reference librarian at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), retiring in 2003. During her tenure at UCSB, she was instrumental in creating a for credit course on library research strategies and resources. She was also

the subject specialist for Anthropology and was on the advisory committees for both the UCSB online cataloging systems as well as the University of California's systemwide online catalog.

Throughout her life, Carol loved to visit family and friends throughout the United States and strived to attend every important family event for her nieces and nephews. Some of her annual trips were to Yosemite National Park, Grand Canyon, and she was the key family organizer for trips on the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad to hike and camp in Needleton, Colorado. She often traveled with stacks of postcards and stamps to send to family and friends. She was always ready for a new adventure and especially enjoyed traveling abroad.

Following her retirement, Carol was particularly passionate and devoted to volunteering for three local nature organizations. She was a weekly volunteer for Carpinteria Seal Watch, which provides information and population data for a local harbor seal rookery during pupping season. She became a docent for the UCSB Sedgwick Reserve, where she became known as the expert on Sedgwick history and gave talks each year. Carol was an avid hiker and belonged to the Santa Ynez Women Hikers for over 20 years. In recent years, she was a key member of the group's hike planning committee, continuing her involvement in the years when she no longer participated in the weekly hikes.

Carol is survived by her brothers, Edwin Gibbens of Aurora, Colorado; Gary Gibbens (Terri) of Victoria Island, British Columbia; and her brother-in-law Patrick Cunningham. She is predeceased by her sisters Ruth Maye Craig and husband Kenneth Craig, Myrna Lee Gibbens, Roylene Gibbens Cunningham, and sister-in-law Mary Gibbens. She is also survived by her beloved nieces and nephews: Carol Cunningham Hutte, Cindy Cunningham Kazanis, Eileen Cunningham, Andrew Craig, Meril Craig, Lynn Graff, Ann Slevin, Mary Lynn Gibbens, Charlie Gibbens, Doug Gibbens, Jim Gibbens, Tom Gibbens, Jill

Parker, Kirsten Parker, Cal Gibbens, and numerous grand and great grand nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held in Carol's honor at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 25, 2025, at McPherson Chapel on the Fort Lewis Campus in Durango, Colorado. A Celebration of Life will take place in Santa Barbara, California, in early 2026. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be sent to Friends of the Durango Public Library, Los Padres Forest Association (Goleta), UCSB Sedgwick Reserve, or Ridley-Tree Cancer Center (Santa Barbara).

To order memorial trees or send flowers to the family in memory of Carol Beth Gibbens, please visit our flower store.

Make a donation to LOS PADRES FOREST ASSOCIATION INC in memory of Carol Beth Gibbens