



Mrs. Mary Jo Riffle

September 18, 1924 - May 20, 2013

Santa Barbara, CA, native, Mary Jo (Spreitz) Riffle, died at home peacefully in her sleep the morning of May 20, 2013, after a long decline in her health.

Mary Jo Riffle moved to Hope Ranch in 1932, at the age of seven, with her mother, Mae Spreitz Marton, and stepfather, Ed Marton. She attended Hope Elementary School in Santa Barbara and Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy middle school and high school in La Canada, CA. She graduated from there in 1941. Two years later, in 1943, while working on a business degree at USC, she met the love of her life, Stanley Riffle. They met at a dance for service men at Camp Cook (now Vandenberg AFB). Theirs was a quick courtship because their marriage plans accelerated when Stan was suddenly transferred to officers training at Army Jump School in Fort Benning, GA. Stan's young bride went with him. Mary Jo moved back home to "The Ranch" in 1944 when Stan was shipped overseas to fight in the Pacific.

Mary Jo continued to live at The Ranch all the while her husband, Stan, was away at war, raising her first son, Stanley Jr., and helping her Mother run two family businesses--a commercial lemon ranch and the Santa Barbara Transit Company. During the years following Stan's safe return, they had three more children, a daughter and two sons. Marijo was born in 1950, Lewis in 1952 and Laird in 1954.

Mary Jo was a hard-working woman. She was employed as a bookkeeper for several Santa Barbara companies over the years, most notably, Bailey Construction from 1960 until the mid 1970's. She continued in the construction field doing books for California Tennis Courts and Hugh Thorsten before taking the role of office manager for her sons' business, JO Construction. She did their books up until a few years ago, tasking tax accountants to follow her hand-written yellow ledgers.

She appreciated her many life-long friends and their families who spent happy seasons together at Hope Ranch Beach and other multi-family outings over the years. Mary Jo and Stan enjoyed traveling together to Hawaii after they launched their family from the nest, bringing more friends back home with them. After Stan's death, Mary Jo continued to travel with family and friends and made many trips to Laughlin, NV. One of her favorite family traditions was spending a couple of weeks every summer at Virginia Lakes Resort in the eastern high Sierra.

Mary Jo was preceded in death by her two half brothers, Frank Sylvester and Gaylord Spreitz, her wonderful daughter, Marijo Riffle, in 1977 and her beloved, ever-patient mate, Stan Riffle, in 1989.

Never envisioning how her life would unfold after Stan's death, she enjoyed a bonus of 24 more years watching grand kids grow and develop, instilling and encouraging a persistent and distinctive will in all of them. She lived a long and committed life. Now, Mary Jo, your job is done.

Hope Ranch has lost its longest-living resident member. Mary Jo grew up in a beautiful place and worked hard to keep it as a legacy for her family. She is survived by her sons and daughters-in-law, Stan and Jollena (Point Roberts WA), Lewis, Laird and Paige (Hope Ranch) and her four grand children, Jenny, Jason, Cierra and Duncan Riffle.

The Riffle family would like to thank all those in the medical field who helped her stay young over the years. Most recently, Randi from Assisted Care and the Barrera sisters, Carla and Lupe, who gave us some much needed help, care, and concern in her last days with us.

There will be a simple gravesite service this Thursday, May 23, at 2:30 pm at the Santa Barbara Cemetery.

Previous Events

Graveside Service

MAY 23. 2:30 PM (PT)

Santa Barbara Cemetery
901 Channel Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93108
(805) 969-3231