



Ruth Pratt Ham

April 1, 1923 - December 17, 2013

"The greatest thing you'll ever learn, is just to love and be loved in return."
Lyrics from "Nature Boy" by eden ahbez (made popular by Nat King Cole, 1948)

Ruth Pratt Ham was born the first daughter of Curtis Gordon and Florence (Dale) Pratt on April 1, 1923 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Lovingly raised in the Northeast during the privations of the Great Depression and tempered by the intense devotions of World War II, Ruth was possessed of an optimism that could not be quenched.

A graduate of Wheelock College in 1945, she worked as an elementary school teacher in Teaneck, New Jersey until the rapturous summer of 1949 in York, Maine where she was introduced to the love of her life. Cornelius Kimball Ham and Ruth were married that same year on the December solstice -- "the longest night of the year." Together, they reared four daughters and a son in faraway Lima, Peru and throughout California.

An indefatigable mother and consummate wife, Ruth inspired all with her grace, courage, generosity, clemency, and humor. She was filled with sincere enthusiasms for golf, reading, cooking, puzzles, games, travel, festive celebrations, and family gatherings. Creatures of every stripe were honored Ham clan members, and each animal took lessons in loyalty and unconditional love from Ruth. She was the dedicated leader for years of the Girl Scouts of America in Lima, provided assistance to malnourished Peruvian children, volunteered with Santa Barbara Public Library's literacy program,

and committed her time and treasure to El Montecito Presbyterian Church for nearly four decades.

Ruth P. Ham passed away on December 17, 2013 at the Samarkand's Smith Health Center. She was predeceased by her beloved husband of fifty-five years, Kim Ham, and her cherished sisters Virginia Sellman of Connecticut and Nancy Laack of Georgia. She is survived by her children and their spouses, Marena Ham of Santa Barbara, Curtis and Janet Ham of Maine, Susan and Peter Heldman of San Francisco, Carol and William Komlos of Utah, and Barbara and John Campbell of Vermont. She also leaves behind her adored grandchildren Robin Komlos, Jessika Campbell, Helen Ham, Lillian Ham, Kameron Campbell, Jake Ham, Tommy John Campbell and Ruthie Ham, her dear brother-in-law Nils D. Sellman, treasured friends, kith and kin.

A remembrance service will be held Saturday, March 15, 2014 (2PM) at the Samarkand Chapel, 2550 Treasure Drive, Santa Barbara, California.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Samarkand Benevolent Care Fund.