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Maureen Hart Ripley Steele Obituary



Maureen Hart Ripley Steele, our devoted and loving mother, passed away at her home in Naples, Florida, on July 8, 2022, with her family by her side.

Maureen was born on May 14, 1937, in Malden, Mass. She graduated from St. Clement's High School and became a stewardess with United Airlines.

Maureen married the love of her life, George Holt Ripley (Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps/Brigadier General, Virginia Militia) and they shared a wonderful life of 29 years until his passing in 1988. Maureen and George moved where the Marine Corps sent them from 1959 until 1979, including paces as diverse as Clarksburg, West Virginia and Bangkok, Thailand. George's last Marine Corps assignment in 1974 took them back to Lexington, Virginia, where Maureen provided invaluable support to George as he established VMI's Naval ROTC Unit, and subsequently his role as VMI Deputy Superintendent.

Maureen married Marion Archibald Steele in 1995, and they enjoyed a life together in Marietta and Lake Oconee, Ga., and Chester, Va. until his passing in 2005. She subsequently resided in Richmond until moving to Naples in 2019.

Maureen's immediate and extended family was her highest priority throughout her life. She was a strong and compassionate caregiver to both of her husbands. Maureen was bold and beautiful - a tall, striking redhead -- as a stewardess for United Airlines in the heyday of glamorous air travel. She was a consummate Marine Corps wife in the traditional manner, creating warm,

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inviting homes for her family wherever they were assigned. She delighted in being the perfect hostess, learning the cuisines of the various places they were assigned throughout their career, and adding her own flair. She always strived to make everyone welcome and comfortable, and that quality has been ingrained in each of her daughters and grandchildren. Maureen expressed her creativity through oil and watercolor painting. Her love of music ranged from bluegrass to Frank Sinatra, and anything in between.

To her grandchildren, Maureen was Nanny -- a warm, humorous, and captivating grandmother who encouraged their imaginations and ambitions, taught the importance of family and, when older, the perfect cocktail recipes. She was proud of each grandchild for the adventures they chose and the people they became.

Maureen is predeceased by both husbands; her parents, Helen May and Ronald Henry Hart; her sister Helen Heneghan, her granddaughter, Elizabeth Hart Dalton, and stepson, Jackson Steele.

Maureen is survived by her three daughters and their families: Mary Ellen Ripley and sons, George Mauck (Meaghan), Douglas Mauck (fiancée Jennifer Bardaro), and Thomas Mauck; Elizabeth Ower Mohle (Kurt), and their children Ripley Ower Mohle (partner Jennifer Gardin), Sarah Ower Mohle, and Gabrielle Ower Mohle (Dustin Durrance); and Susan Dalton and her husband (Michael), and daughters Meagan Shipp (Jeremy), and Maureen Dalton.

Maureen is survived by two stepdaughters, Mary Wannall and daughters, Hannah and Peyton; and Elizabeth Koziatek (Dan), and children Katie and Jackson.

Maureen is also survived by brother-in-law Frank, with whom she has shared a lifetime of wonderful memories, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Maureen's family sincerely thanks Avow Hospice Care, Naples, Fla., team for its compassionate care and support for Maureen and her family. In lieu of flowers, please donate to your local hospice program.

There will be a visitation on Friday, July 29, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Harrison Funeral Home, 714 S. Main St., Lexington, Va. A Mass will be celebrated at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Lexington at 11:00 a.m. July 30, with interment at Oak Grove Cemetery. The family invites family and friends to a reception at Moody Hall on the VMI Post afterwards.

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