



Mary Ruth Montgomery Pledger

July 16, 1922 - March 12, 2012

Mary Ruth Filgo Montgomery Pledger of Lancaster died Monday, March 12, eighteen days after the passing of her beloved husband of 55 years, Bill Pledger.

Mary Ruth was born July 16, 1922 in Lancaster to Ruby Jo and Joseph Taylor Filgo. She and her brothers were raised on a farm west of town, where in the summers the family operated Cedar Brook Ranch, a well-known summer camp for children. After graduating from Lancaster High School at the age of 16, she attended Texas Wesleyan College, where she was named "Smile Queen," and she then went on to receive her bachelor's degree from SMU.

It was in 1945, while doing war work at Love Field, that Mary Ruth met a young, charismatic Mississippian, Bill Montgomery, a Navy pilot stationed in Dallas. Bill fell in love with the beautiful, sweet-natured Texas country girl, and after a whirlwind courtship they were married later that year, at the First Methodist Church in Lancaster. Bill and Mary Ruth had two children, Glenn and Gail, and the couple was expecting their third child, Julia Lee, when Bill died in April 1953 in the crash of a twin-engined aircraft he was co-piloting.

With her two children, Mary Ruth traveled from Arlington, Va., where she and Bill had been living while he was stationed at the Pentagon, back to Lancaster, moving in with her mother and her youngest brother Roy Lee.

It was in 1956 that the young widow got a call from Lieutenant Commander Bill Pledger, whose Navy flight instructor had been Bill Montgomery. A mutual Navy friend had told Bill Pledger, who at the time was stationed in Dallas, that Mary Ruth was living in the Dallas area. A romance developed, and the two were married Jan. 13, 1957, one of the last weddings in the original sanctuary of Lancaster's First Methodist Church.

In 1959, Bill received orders to report to North Island Naval Air Station in Coronado, Calif. for a three-year tour of duty. Following that, the family moved back to Lancaster, where Bill and Mary Ruth were to live the rest of their lives.

Family, friends and church were priorities in Mary Ruth's life. She was a devoted and caring mother to her three children, a loving wife, and an active participant and organizer in all of the get-togethers of the large Filgo family in the Lancaster area.

All her life, Mary Ruth was a member of First United Methodist Church in Lancaster. She was a long-time church secretary and was flower chairman upwards of 30 years. She was active in the PTA, serving a term as president.

Flower-arranging provided a creative outlet for Mary Ruth, who was a member of several area garden clubs and served as president of one. Her creativity took other forms as well, and she enjoyed crafting hand-made items that she sold at her M Ruth shop on the Lancaster Square in the early 1970s. When her husband opened Bill's Hallmark in the shopping center at the corner of Pleasant Run and Westridge streets in Lancaster in the early '80s, Mary Ruth eventually moved her gift shop there and kept it active until Hallmark closed in 1999.

As she approached her 80th year, Mary Ruth's health started to decline, a

downward spiral that was to continue for the last 10 years of her life. She faced the ever-increasing hardships of old age with a sense of humor and a smile, with courage, dignity and grace, and with a beauty and blue-eyed charm that never faded.

Even though he himself was growing increasingly frail, Bill was a loving caregiver to his wife, making it possible for her to remain at home until the last seven months of her life.

Mary Ruth was preceded in death by her husbands, William G. Montgomery, Jr. and William Gilbert Pledger; her parents, Joseph Taylor and Ruby Filgo; brothers Ray and Roy Lee Filgo; and nephew Robert Filgo.

Mary Ruth's passing is mourned by many family members, including:

Her devoted children and grandchildren: William Glenn Montgomery III (Cary); Gail Montgomery Corley; Julia Montgomery Taylor (Don); Sarah Kristin Gossett; Mary Rebekah Gossett; Kaitlin Taylor Jesiolowski (A.J.); and Julia Katherine Corley.

Bill's beloved sons and grandchildren: William G. Pledger, Jr. (Barbara); Robert P. Pledger (Virginia); Reed G. Pledger; Jeffrey Pledger; Stephen Pledger (Valerie); and Kelli Pledger.

Brother: William Filgo

Sisters-in-law: Peggy Filgo; Lana Filgo

Cousins: Harold Filgo; Dorothy Filgo; Holland Filgo, Jr; James Magill (Patty); and Helen Mickelsen;

Nephews: John Taylor Filgo (Sharon); Clayton Pledger (Sherri); and Captain James E. Pledger, USN (Ret) (Donna).

Nieces: Susan Filgo; Becky Colwill (Brian); Beth Bailey (Mel); and Barbara Rushing (Joe).

And by a host of great nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

A memorial service for Mary Ruth will be held Saturday, March 24 at 2:30 PM at the First United Methodist Church, 201 South Dallas Ave., Lancaster, 75146.

Tribute Wall



“ *Such a lady,
such a dear
RIP.##imported-begin##shirley haight##imported-end##*

March 25, 2012 at 12:39 PM



“ *We are so saddened by Mary Ruth death. Going on her obit page we learned of Bills death also. We are in a state of shock, loosing 2 of our earliest friends in Lancaster. We have so many fun memories of our years in the Little Theater. Many, many laughs we all had. Mary Ruth knew Bill was "safe", if he was with the Little Theater bunch. We have so many delightful memories of our years together. Jack and I have both had back surgeries in the past 4 months, so we are hoping to make the service. If we are not, we will be there in spirit, for sure. Lovingly, Pat and Jack##imported-begin##Jack and Pat Royder##imported-end##*

March 23, 2012 at 02:53 PM



“ *WE ARE SAD TO LEARN OF THE PASSING OF MARY RUTH. SHE WAS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL AND SPECIAL LADY AND LOVED BY ALL. OUR SINCERE SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILY. LOVE,
BILL AND LOIS HOLMES##imported-begin##BILL AND LOIS HOLMESW##imported-end##*

March 23, 2012 at 07:50 AM



“ So sorry to hear of her passing, as I remember growing up with her gift shop and I knew the Filgo's and Montgomery's. My sympathy to all family and friends.##imported-begin##Bobbye J Paulson (Sexton)##imported-end##

March 22, 2012 at 07:23 PM



“ Gail, Your mother sounds like a remarkable woman. I know you will miss her dearly. I hope you find comfort in your friends and family. Love, Sandra##imported-begin##Sandra Hryekewicz##imported-end##

March 21, 2012 at 11:38 AM



“ I grew up in the same Methodist church as Mrs. Pledger. I will always remember her as one of the most beautiful women i had ever seen. She was so friendly and outgoing and so fashionable. A very remarkable woman, even to a young girl.##imported-begin##kathy wilder laue##imported-end##

March 20, 2012 at 07:53 PM



“ card8\fh##imported-begin####imported-end##

March 20, 2012 at 02:38 PM



“ MY HIGH SCHOOL CLASSMATE AND A WONDERFUL LADY AND FRIEND. MY MEMORIES ARE ALL WONDERFUL. MY SYMPATHY TO ALL OF HER FAMILY.##imported-begin##KEITH MARKS##imported-end##

March 20, 2012 at 12:12 PM



“ Julia,

My deepest sympathy to you and your family of your Mothers passing.

Blessings,

Susan O'Quinn Beal###imported-begin##Susan O'Quinn Beal###imported-end##

March 18, 2012 at 07:12 PM



“ Gail and family,

I am so sad to see the news about your mom and earlier your dad. Know that we are thinking of you and praying for your family.

Kay###imported-begin##Kay Couchman Simons###imported-end##

March 18, 2012 at 02:43 PM



“ Mary Ruth was my mentor. She shared business and personal advise to me many times. She was the Emily Post of Lancaster. I will always remember her wonderful chicken curry for the bridge group and the elegance in which she treated guest in their home. She was a true Southern Lady and I will keep her in my heart forever.##imported-begin##Cookie Shepard###imported-end##

March 18, 2012 at 11:13 AM



“ A wonderful lady with a smile for everyone. My sincere sympathy to the family in the loss of such a special woman.##imported-begin##Debra Grantham###imported-end##

March 18, 2012 at 09:48 AM



“ A lovely memorial for a truly lovely lady. We are so sorry for your loss. We are keeping you all in our prayers.##imported-begin##Rick and Kia Gary##imported-end##

March 18, 2012 at 01:42 AM



“ my deepest sympathy..Mary Ruth is a wonderful Lancaster memory for all who lived there and grew up there. Such a special woman!##imported-begin##Mary Maddox##imported-end##

March 17, 2012 at 10:23 PM



“ I have but two words to describe Mary Ruth , Classy Lady. May her soul rest in peace.##imported-begin##Monica may##imported-end##

March 13, 2012 at 08:13 PM



“ Everyone knows how beautiful and classy Mary Ruth always dressed and looked. Whether shw was at the card shop or just running around Lancaster. Every hair was in place. My husband John & I once lived in the same neighborhood as the Pledgers. Mary Ruth would walk through our streets for exercise. Being the good person she was, she would pick up trash along her route. So she became our neighborhood "Bag Lady". We loved to tease her. I can still see her beautiful smile. Thanks for bringing beauty into our lives.##imported-begin##Monica May##imported-end##

March 13, 2012 at 12:00 AM



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Monica May###imported-begin##Monica May###imported-end##

March 13, 2012 at 12:00 AM