



## Mary Ida Sprague

July 24, 1931 - March 24, 2020

Mary Ida Brown Sprague, 88, of Asheville, passed away peacefully on March 24, 2020. Her loving husband Peter was faithfully by her side. We believe Mary Ida wanted to live to see spring...and she did!

Born in Asheville on July 24, 1931, she was the youngest child of Hugh Crawford Brown, Sr. and Lelia Eleanor Mitchell Brown. She was preceded in death by her siblings: Lelia Eleanor Brown Hall (James), Hugh Crawford Brown, Jr. (Nell) and Dr. Edwin Louis Brown (Nicolette).

Mary Ida is survived by her husband of 63 years, Peter Hale Sprague, Sr.; their five children Peter Hale Sprague, Jr. (Leslee) of Asheville, Mary Stewart Sprague Duffy (Scott) of Charlotte, Eleanor Sprague Grady Jameson (Randy) of Asheville, David Badger Sprague (Diane) of Boone and Sallie Kate Sprague Winter (Paul) of Raleigh; their 14 grandchildren Allison, Morgan (Robert Martin) and Natalie Sprague; Genevieve Duffy; Monica, Myles, Shannon and Claire Grady; Eleanor, Mary Louise and David W. Sprague, and Thomas (Amber), Peter (Kristie) and David Winter; and many nieces and nephews.

Mary Ida lived wholeheartedly in the mountains of Asheville. She was molded and influenced by her siblings, life in Beaverdam and on the Scarborough farm, her father's outward assistance during the Great Depression, and after his death, the strength and determination of her young mother. She often spoke about her fond memories at Central United Methodist Church, especially the youth group, swimming with friends at Beaver Lake and riding horses in Grove Park. Mary Ida attended St. Genevieve-of-the-Pines, Southern Seminary Junior College in Buena Vista, VA, earned a degree in Elementary Education at UNC-Chapel Hill, and taught 2nd grade at Newton Academy.

She met her husband Peter in Chapel Hill, where they studied and enjoyed two fun-filled years together. They were married November 24, 1956, and spent two memorable years in Tokyo, Japan, where Peter served in the Army CIC and Mary Ida taught at Hardy Barracks, an American school for army children. They lived in Philadelphia for a brief

period and then returned to Asheville to raise their family.

Mary Ida dearly loved, cared for and devoted her life to faith, family and friends. She enjoyed family gatherings and meals, supporting her children, grandchildren and family members at their athletic events, dance performances, concerts and recitals. She exhibited and taught her family how to live by the 'Fruit of the Spirit' while being adventurous and fun. We will always remember her beautiful and contagious smile, love of music, positive attitude, sense of humor, and loving soul.

Mary Ida was an active member of Grace Episcopal Church where her involvement was widespread. Her life also intertwined with the Asheville community, serving in various capacities with Asheville City Schools PTA, The Junior League of Asheville, The Junior Vetust Club and The Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County. She was a board member of Irene Wortham Center and president of Town and Country Garden Club. She enjoyed her time working at Gallery of the Mountains, selling American-made crafts and sharing her knowledge of Asheville with Grove Park Inn guests.

Our family is sincerely appreciative of Betty Coley, her faithful companion; Barbara Wilcox, who brought communion every Sunday from Grace Church; and the special caregivers, staff and residents of Brooks-Howell Home.

We will celebrate Mary Ida's life at a later date. Morris Funeral & Cremation Care is assisting the family. We are respectfully requesting no flowers at this time. Remembrances may be made to Grace Episcopal Church, MemoryCare Asheville or Brooks-Howell Home.

# Comments

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“ So sorry to hear today of Mary Ida's passing. She was a true lady and the matriarch of a wonderful Asheville family. Over the years we interfaced when Pete and I were working on United Way projects, or when Peter and I were involved in some Boy Scout activity. She was the epitome of class and a role model for her children and for all with whom she came in contact. My condolences to her family and friends. She will be missed.

**Richard Hurley** - April 12 at 08:14 PM

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“ As I sit here at my computer on this Easter evening my thoughts are on the Peter and Mary Ida Sprague family. They are one of Asheville's most respected, well thought of and most loved families of all time. So many children and grandchildren to mention by name. I think it all started with Mary Ida, a great , loving, caring lady who met a young man named Peter, who had all the same qualities that she had, they fell in love, their love and devotion for each other has touched countless lives since. So on this Easter Day, I give thanks to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the life of Mary Ida. And while Mary Ida is enjoying her new home in Heaven, let's all remember to pray for Peter and their loving children and grandchildren. Heaven is a little brighter this Easter because Mary Ida is home. Praise God! Bill and Mary Dot Waddell

**Bill Waddell** - April 12 at 07:27 PM

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“ Many amazing memories with Grandmama. I will forever remember the chicken dinners that she and Pop hosted at their stunning home in Asheville. She always was a wonderful hostess and made me feel like a part of the family. I felt fortunate to have known her.

Caleb Y.

**Caleb** - April 12 at 04:20 PM

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“ As a former member of Grace Episcopal, I fondly remember Mary Ida's loving cheerfulness and embodiment of living a Christ-centered life. May you find comfort in knowing her memory is treasured by many. Martha Zeigler

**Martha Zeigler** - April 12 at 12:51 PM

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“ My mother was a first cousin to Mary Ida. Along the way, I was able to visit Mary Ida at her Asheville home accompanied by various female relatives.

Mary Ida was a genteel southern lady, full of grace and warmth, in manner and bearing, but always with a twinkle in her eye. Her welcoming demeanor put one immediately at ease. She and Peter were gracious hosts to our infrequent visits.

I cherish those memories. They are memorable and priceless. I will miss her. I pray that God bless the family with comfort and peace.

- Rick Furman



**Rick Furman** - March 28 at 04:39 PM

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“ Oh my! Where to begin. Mary Ida was grace personified, beloved wife, mother, grandmother and member of our community at large. My heart goes out to each of you. I am so grateful for the opportunities to share friendships over many years. I hold you individually and collectively in my heart through these exceedingly difficult times.

**Deborah Lewis** - March 25 at 09:30 AM