



Mary Petersiel Schochet

October 3, 1918 - November 10, 2016

Mary Petersiel Schochet left this earth “to go dancing into the ‘next thing’ with” her late husband Sidney on November 10, 2016.

That’s how her granddaughter described Mary’s next adventure to her in her last hours.

Born October 3, 1918, in Richmond, VA, to Nathan and Celia Amster Petersiel, Mary excelled in business at a young age. She began working in her father’s small grocery shop during the depths of the Depression when she was 8 years old. And she retired in 2006 from the Asheville retail businesses she and her husband owned. Hers was an 80-year run of retail expertise.

Mary came to Asheville as a war bride in 1944. She met her husband Sidney Schochet at a dance for WWII soldiers in Richmond, VA. When she came to Asheville, she became part of a family with roots there going back to 1887. The large extended Blomberg family’s many members owned retail stores throughout downtown Asheville for generations. Mary and Sidney were the last ones of that line, ending with Mary’s 2006 retirement one year after Sidney’s passing.

As co-owner of The Bootery, later called The Star Bootery, and A Dancer’s Place, Mary outfitted four generations of Western North Carolina’s dancers

including one Miss America, a family friend. Mary and Sidney also outfitted many of the area's cowboys with boots and hats; city workers with warm gloves and work boots; majorettes with parade boots and batons; and citizens of WNC with tennis shoes; dress shoes; bedroom slippers; Levi's, Wrangler and Lee jeans; Converse Chuck Taylors; bellbottoms and go-go boots to name just a few of the items Mary and Sidney fit with pride six days a week for six decades.

One of the pillars of the post-WWII downtown business scene, Mary was often greeted by customers wherever she went, sometimes called out to as "Miss Bootery" by folks who grew up being brought into her stores by parents or grandparents but didn't know her name. She would smile and greet them all warmly.

Mary was active in Asheville's civic life, serving on the boards of many local organizations including the early years of Blue Ridge Mental Health, the Asheville Civic Ballet, Beth Ha Tephila Sisterhood, and the Jewish Community Center.

Congregation Beth Ha Tephila served as a cornerstone of family life for Mary and her husband and two children, as did the Asheville Jewish Community Center. Mary and Sidney faithfully attended BHT's Friday night services for more than 60 years and were happy to greet newcomers and friends at the many social gatherings of both institutions.

Mary relaxed into her favorite hobby in the Asheville duplicate bridge community. Much of her non-working time was spent in friendly, fun competitive card playing at The Bridge Room where her closest friends were made. She attained the level of Life Master in 1974. Duplicate bridge continued to provide a social community after Mary retired to Chapel Hill, NC, in 2006. She was active in the Durham duplicate bridge scene and ran the

duplicate bridge game at The Cedars of Chapel Hill for several years.

Mary is survived by her daughter, Jan Schochet, her son Barry Schochet (Gayle) and granddaughter Amanda Schochet and a step-brother Allen Petersiel.

Mary's predeceased family include her parents, her beloved half-sisters Rhoda Petersiel Pearlman and Beverly Petersiel, a step-sister Maxine Mullen and her beloved brother-in-law Eugene Schochet and sister-in-law Lillian Schochet Levy.

The family would like to thank the Cedars of Chapel Hill for providing Mary with a caring and easy community to be a part of for the last 10 years of her life. We especially want to thank Mary's caregivers over the last two years, Evangeline Worrell, Mariana McAnuff, Noleen Collins, Shauna Killough, Alice Kortor, Carlette Fields, Shirley Starks and the many other CNAs from Cedars Home Health Care who kept Mary happy and healthy. Thanks also to nurse Karen Ginsburg.

We also deeply appreciate the kind, thoughtful and excellent care provided over the last seven years by Dr. Steven Kizer, his assistant Yvette Hall and his staff at the UNC Geriatric clinic—nurses Lisa and Isobel, scheduler Mario and all those on phone support.

In addition the staff of the MICU department at UNC Hospital served Mary in the best way possible during her last few days.

Funeral services are at 2:00pm on Sunday, November 13, 2016, at Congregation Beth HaTephila followed by a gravesite service at Riverside Cemetery. After the gravesite service, everyone is invited to attend a reception

at the social hall of Beth HaTephila. Shiva will be at the residence of Jan Schochet on Sunday, November 13, 2016 at 7:30pm and Monday, November 14, 2016 at 7:30pm.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations in Mary's memory be made to Congregation Beth Ha Tephila, 43 N. Liberty Street, Asheville, NC 28801 or The Asheville Jewish Community Center, 236 Charlotte St, Asheville, NC, 28801 or the Employee Fund of The Cedars of Chapel Hill, 100 Cedar Club Circle, Chapel Hill, NC 27517.

Cemetery Details

Riverside Cemetery

53 Birch Street
Asheville, NC 28801

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Petersiel Schochet*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Sincere condolences to Barry, a former school mate and to the family and friends of Ms. Schochet.*
Bobbie Moore Gates
Atlanta Ga.



Bobbie - February 13, 2017 at 11:34 AM



“ *I played bridge with Mary at the Triangle Bridge Club. She was a lovely lady, who would never reveal her age, but who always kept her nails polished. Gracious and always a pleasure to be around, she was a great example of the bridge player who had great card sense and success, while using few bridge conventions. She was a pleasure to play with and I'll miss her. I appreciated her always complimenting the member profiles that I wrote for the unit newsletter. I regret that I didn't get by to see her when she could no longer play. My sincere sympathy to Jan, Barry, Amanda, and Allen.*

Liz McGuffey

Liz McGuffey - November 16, 2016 at 07:40 PM



Thank you Liz.

Jan - November 19, 2016 at 04:45 PM

IK

“ We will miss Mary. We played bridge with her. She was such a good player. As her vision was failing she could still play excellent bridge. She had a great memory and knew exactly what she was doing. Mary always had a smile.
Irwin and Deb Kahn

Irwin & Deb Kahn - November 16, 2016 at 10:28 AM

JA

Thank you Kahns. My mom really appreciated her bridge friends and acquaintances.

Jan - November 19, 2016 at 04:46 PM

MW

“ The death of Mrs. Mary Petersiel Schochet is the most devastating experiences a family can face. At times, the loss may seem unbearable. Please know that there are those who care and more importantly Psalm 34:18 tells us that "God is near to those that are broken at heart. Jehovah is the God of all comfort. My prayers are with you and your family.

Mrs. Williams - November 15, 2016 at 08:52 PM

ML

“ I am a bridge friend of Mary's from Chapel Hill. She was always pleasant and welcoming at the bridge table. Her eyesight was failing for the last several years so the bids, the cards in the dummy hand and the cards being played were announced to her. She would then carefully select the card she wanted to play, nothing wrong with her mind, just her sight. Last summer I was teaching an Adult Bridge Camp in the inner room at the Triangle Bridge Club location while games were being played in the outer room. I had told my group that we use bidding cards, we don't say the bids out loud. One of my students looked puzzled then said he had just gotten some coffee and had heard people in the playing room saying their bids out loud. I knew Mary had to be playing at her usual table near the door to the hospitality area and sure enough she was. My students were stunned to realize that someone who couldn't see could remember all of the cards in order to play the game. I will always remember Mary fondly,
Maggie Lindquist

Maggie Lindquist - November 15, 2016 at 05:01 PM

JA

Thank you for such a wonderful memory Maggie. Yes, she definitely remembered cards. When I was a kid, she would call her best friend the day after a night bridge game and she would go over all the plays-- who had what cards in different boards and what everyone played. I was amazed at that from an early age.

Jan - November 19, 2016 at 04:44 PM

 Betsy Mebane

“ It was always a pleasure seeing Mary at the bridge table. She always asked about you and really cared about your answer! She will be missed by her many fellow bridge players.

Betsy Mebane - November 14, 2016 at 09:23 PM

JS

Thank you Betsy--are you in Asheville or Chapel Hill?

jan schochet - November 15, 2016 at 06:41 AM

MD

“ *Such a lovely woman. Mary was always in good spirits and soldiered on even when she had such a hard time seeing the cards. She seemed to be enjoying life and was fortunate to make a quick exit. I will miss her smiling face and charming ways.*

Mary Jo Doherty

Mary Jo Doherty - November 14, 2016 at 08:16 PM

JM

“ *Memories go back so many years and even follow us to Eldoret, Kenya. The Schochet Family is integral to remembering our childhood and youth.*

We send love to the family from far away.

Dr. Joe Mamlin

Joseph Jerome Mamlin - November 13, 2016 at 09:54 PM

JS

Thank you so much Joe. My parents always enjoyed an opportunity to talk about your success, of which they were very proud. I hope to see you again sometime soon. Jan Schochet

Jan Schochet - November 14, 2016 at 11:06 AM

KH

“ *Mary S., Was a sweet Beautiful Lady. I truly enjoyed visiting and shopping in her store. Mary always made you so welcome I, loved her dearly. We all know Mary is dancing with the Angels. Our Prayers and love are with all her Family..*

Kenneth & Sue Hudgins - November 13, 2016 at 09:16 AM

JS

Thank you Hudgins family.

jan schochet - November 15, 2016 at 06:42 AM

WL

Oh Jan I loved her Mom and Dad they(and you) were and always been so kind to me...since the days I first wandered into the Bootery to buy my first pair of Bell Bottoms and dingo boots..I loved them always..even though I never saw them much in these later years...You are all forever in My heart dear and deep....May Peace encompass..all of you..Wayne Paul Liles

Wayne Liles - November 15, 2016 at 09:09 PM

JA

Thanks Wayne.

Jan - November 19, 2016 at 04:41 PM