



Mary B. "Mimi" Shackelford

November 13, 1936 - January 5, 2023

Mimi Shackelford (86) of Asheville, NC passed away in her home on January 5, 2023. She was born in Rocky Mount, NC, and graduated from Women's College in Greensboro, NC in 1958. Mimi is survived by her daughter Darden Coe (David) of Orlando, FL, son John Shackelford (Conchie) of Sewanee, TN, daughter Rom Yoeun, seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

She was a creator, an artist, an educator, a tennis enthusiast, a loving parent, a grandparent, a neighbor, and a friend to everyone she met on her daily laps around Beaver Lake. Mimi was active for many years in the Asheville community including working at The Health Adventure for 16 years, teaching art classes in her basement to dozens of area children, being Director of Christian Education at Trinity Episcopal Church, volunteering at ABCCM, The Junior League, Green Circle, Return to Bethlehem, Sharing Affair, Hospice, Tell It In The Mountains, The Health Adventure Clown Troupe, Jubilee! Community Church and Arts For Life.

A celebration of life is planned for Saturday, April 8 in Asheville at UNC Asheville in the Blue Ridge Room (203) at 1:30 p.m. Bright color attire is encouraged. Memorial donations may be made to Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity, 33 Meadow Road, Asheville, NC 28803 or ashevillehabitat.org

Previous Events

A Life Well Lived Celebration

APR 8. 1:30 PM (ET)

UNC Asheville
1 University Heights

Highsmith Student Union, Blue Ridge Room (203) Bright color attire encouraged

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary B. "Mimi" Shackelford*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *I had the pleasure of working with Mimi on several art related projects over a ten year period. She was a one of a kind gentle human.*

Tim Arem - May 04, 2023 at 11:10 AM



“ *My family and I lived across the street from Mimi for five wonderful years. Despite us being newcomers, she made us feel completely welcome from the start, even co-organizing a neighborhood baby shower for my first son. I'd see her out walking at least once a week, and she was never not a delight to talk to whether we discussed gardening tips, neighborhood news, or something else. She was a wonderful woman and friend and will be missed!*

The Rosens - April 24, 2023 at 01:41 PM



“ *I was grateful to have lived in Mimi's quaint carriage house for a few years. She was so generous and a joy to be with. She was truly the energizer bunny! I'm cherishing the cat pillow case she sewed for me. Sending much peace to you all.
Kristin Hillegas.*

Kristin Hillegas - April 09, 2023 at 03:49 PM

MT

“ Mimi, You Represent The Best In All Of Us. Yes... You Have "Passed It On" To The World.

Mary Lou Travis - April 01, 2023 at 08:01 PM

MK

“ I will truly miss seeing the Queen of Aston Park on the tennis court. Thank you Mimi for all the pleasant memories. Exchanging all those books over the years was a lot of un. You knew what I liked and vice versa. What I will miss most is your enthusiasm for life. Mike Krecioch

Mike Krecioch - January 16, 2023 at 12:02 PM

CR

“ Mimi was a force! I loved her energy, enthusiasm and clarity. And she loved stories and storytelling. She was a delight to work on the festival, "Tell It In the Mountains" - I have such fond memories that bring a smile of all the joy and hard work. It was a gift to the whole community and brought so many new listeners into the story world. I also loved seeing her in Jonesborough, TN, every year for the National Storytelling Festival. You will be missed, dear Mimi.

Connie Regan-Blake - January 16, 2023 at 07:12 AM

JG

“ My condolences to Darden and John and all the family. I'm forever grateful for your mother's basement art classes, which in my childhood offered a world-class introduction to creativity. Asheville will miss her incandescent presence and spirit.

James Gardner - January 15, 2023 at 07:46 PM

DC

“ My goodness. We worked together on Return to Bethlehem the very first year, then Tell It in the Mountains and Jubilee Community. What a creative force. She will be greatly missed by so many people.

Deborah Compton - January 15, 2023 at 07:36 PM

DB

“ My wife and I looked forward to talking with Mimi in our walks at Beaver Lake. Never anything other than smiles, laughter, very happy conversation. We hope to meet again so we can enjoy her positive outlook.

David Barnes - January 15, 2023 at 10:08 AM

JN

“ I miss you friend! Who the heck am I going to laugh with, walking around Beaver Lake wearing hats with animals on them? Thank you for your team work on making the hats to raise money for refugees. You are my role model for a healthy life: laughter, joy, giving and lots of exercise! My "be like Mimi" goal for 2023 is to try to walk every day..... and laugh! Love you Mimi! Save me a place at the craft table!

Joan Naylor - January 13, 2023 at 11:00 AM

CS

“ It was such a joy to know Mimi and to see her in action at Jubilee! Her vibrant energy was contagious, and she was a beautiful example of how to age with grace and joy. She is dearly loved.

Claudia Sherry - January 13, 2023 at 10:51 AM

HH

“ I love you, Mimi.

Howard Hanger - January 13, 2023 at 10:23 AM



“ I love you forever Mimi. Such a burst of joy, delight, creativity . . . love in action. Mimi sent a little note in her 2022 Christmas card inviting me to walk at Beaver Lake, saying I walk everyday. I am sorry that I didn't get that chance in this life, I hope in another. Love and prayers to Mimi's family.

Anne Wray - January 12, 2023 at 06:20 PM

AH

“ My heart felt sympathy goes to her family. I worked with Mimi at Trinity Episcopal Church with Sunday School and the children's programs years ago. Always enthusiastic and smiling is how I remember her and her artistic ability. She was a lovely, optimistic person. I was always inspired just by being around her. Heaven will be a more colorful place!

Ann Howell - January 12, 2023 at 06:13 PM

VG

“ While I'm saddened to hear of Mimi's passing, just thinking about her Energizer-Bunny fullness of life brings a smile to my face. When I started working in Jubilee's Nurture Program in 2008, I was already familiar with Mimi's banners, which graced those tall walls, literally for decades. But it was her kindness to me, personally, that I will most remember. I wrote hundreds of lesson plan over the years, and Mimi always had a craft idea at the ready whenever I got stuck (and sometimes when I wasn't stuck)! She even hosted craft workshops that many Nurture staff members participated in over the years. I will certainly miss her lively spirit, her quick generosity, and her profound passion for life. But, I know that I will also enjoy the fruits of her creativity and imagination for many, many years to come. Rest in peace, my friend.

Vicki Garlock - January 12, 2023 at 02:37 PM

DJ

I have many wonderful memories of Mimi at the Health Adventure meetings/ socials / trips on a bus (ouch) she was a great funny person we all loved greatly / she will be missed by the entire community and churches and many organizations! I was blessed to know her and see her nice nice smile ! Peace to family / Doug J

Doug Jones - January 13, 2023 at 06:05 PM

WS

“ *Mimi and my mother-in-law played a lot of doubles tennis, and nothing delighted Mimi more than hitting a 'winner'- which she did often. Loved Mimi's smile and enthusiasm for life! She accomplished so much, and her presence was always energizing. My gosh she will be missed.*

Wilson Sims - January 12, 2023 at 11:09 AM

PG

“ *Mimi was always an inspiring presence at Jubilee! Her creativity, energy, smile, and wit have been missed greatly. I will never look at her beautiful banners without thinking of her. Peace and love to her family as they mourn her passing and celebrate her life.*

Pamela & Wiley Garrett - January 11, 2023 at 09:46 AM

AJ

“ *Mini was truly an icon at Aston Park Tennis Center and I will miss her presence and that sweet smile so very much My deepest condolences to the family. Rest in Peace Mimi. Ann Jolly*

Ann Jolly - January 10, 2023 at 03:12 PM

RK

“ There are so many memories to share, but I will wait for another time to do so. I can only say that there was only one Mimi. She was the Everready bunny, but she always had a smile and knew exactly, in her artwork and in other ways, how she cared. Mimi, I will miss you, but I am grateful to have known you

Ron Katz - January 09, 2023 at 07:12 PM



She was such an inspiration playing singles! Will sure miss seeing her on the courts.

Suzanne Mattera - January 10, 2023 at 04:32 PM

JJ

Mimi was a friend for 80 years reaching back to our elementary school days in Rocky Mount, NC. She remains among the brightest, most optimistic, enthusiastic, and lovable human beings anyone could encounter. Julian M. Aldridge, Jr.

Julian M. Aldridge, Jr. - January 10, 2023 at 07:27 PM

MG

My love to Mimi and her family. I am grateful for my time with her. Mimi taught the ways to show love, how to express creativity, and how to be a clown. I will miss her laughter and her ability to remember jokes. I will continue to hear her in my head and heart. Maralee Gollberg

maralee Gollberg - January 10, 2023 at 10:26 PM

ST

Mimi and I met on the tennis courts shortly after I moved to Asheville in 2015. After we played one day she said to me, "You're the most opinionated person I've ever met." I said, "Hey, I'm from NYC!" But she was right. As a result, we became good friends. We played tennis quite often and she and I spent time together talking about a lot of stuff – sharing personal situations. She was so honest and open and supportive. After I moved back to NYC in 2020 we spoke on the phone once in a while. I'd see her when I went back to Asheville to visit my son and his family. The last time I stopped by her house was over Thanksgiving weekend. As my relationship life evolved, she reminded me, "Don't forget, you're my boyfriend!" which made us both smile. Mimi is one of the most special people I've ever known. My sincere condolences go out to her family. I miss you Mimi.

Steve - January 11, 2023 at 07:39 AM

AG

I never had the opportunity to know Mimi personally but had so many warm and sweet interactions with her at the AstonPark tennis courts. We had the opportunity to play a few times together and I was always struck by her energy her warm spirit and her skill. She was an inspiration to so many.

Alisa Genovese - January 11, 2023 at 08:25 PM

JT

Mimi loved tennis, hated computers, and was gifted in so many ways. She said she'd just as soon eat a pack of peanut butter crackers as a meal at a 5 Star restaurant. The last time we played tennis she destroyed me - and told me I should work on my serve: that I still had "potential"... I was 60, she was 77. A life lived in an exemplary manner.

Jim Taylor - January 12, 2023 at 01:39 PM

LD

Mimi charmed everyone with her bubbling personality and broad spectrum of interests and abilities. We grew up together in Rocky Mount and didn't realize our final goodbye would be just a few weeks ago. R.I.P. Mimi.

Lucinda Oliver Denton - January 13, 2023 at 11:14 AM

FM

I met Mimi when we were both employed at The Health Adventure. I was always amazed at her creativity and art work, whether it was cutting something freehand out of construction paper or creating huge banners to be hung in businesses around town. When I would go to the Red Cross to donate blood, I would see her many banners of corporate logos lining the walls in brilliant colors. I enjoyed doing crafts with her and many of her friends in her basement craft room filled with every kind of craft item imaginable. She and The Health Adventure Clown Troup marched in many a parade, squeezing her horn and pinching her red nose. She was always kind, and loved and lived life to the fullest. Our community, and I, will miss Mimi, and will always remember her enthusiasm.

Fern McCrimmon - January 13, 2023 at 04:59 PM

AW

A wonderful neighbor who brightened the lives of everyone who lived near her. Flowers in my garden from plants that she shared will always remind me of her generous, warm spirit.

Arnold Wengrow - January 15, 2023 at 09:33 AM

BV

In 1994 I met Mimi while enrolled in The Health Adventure Clown workshop that she taught. There are many people in Asheville and the surrounding area who learned the art of clowning through Mimi! We marched in the Christmas parade, raised money for the children's museum, visited hospitals and did stage performances at The Health Adventure. I will always remember the fun times with Mimi clowning around.

Brian Vasilik - March 15, 2023 at 07:44 PM

RR

Mimi showed up with over 100 new volunteers at ABCCM in 1982. Her infectious laugh and winsome spirit bought us all countless moments of joy (like so many shared by others). She captured the Spirit of ABCCM and shaped its logo, then its message, then its special events. Being a friend of Mimi's was not just an honor, but you were instantly part of a larger Mimi family of friends...all of whom would do most anything for her, because she gave so generously of herself to everyone. She shaped the ABCCM Sharing Affair (Asheville's largest street fair, until Belle Chere took off in the 90s which she also helped Leslie build). Then she and her friends started ABCCM's Return to Bethlehem, one of Asheville's longest running Christmas plays. Then, ABCCM's Storytelling Festival, Tell It In the Mountains, for 7 years from about 1993-2000. So many who were involved have already posted about ...Deborah and Barbara, so many more made it all happen at Trinity Episcopal, First Christian -Asheville and now Groce UMC. Mimi served on the ABCCM Board of Directors and countless committees laying a firm foundation for what is now over 300 congregations. Mimi had a gift for drawing circles that invited everyone in and taught us that while others may draw circles that leave us out, Love has the wit to win and drew a circle that took us in...a partial paraphrase of Edwin Markham's poem. Mimi completed the circle of life, and I look forward to joining her and a host of other witnesses in the next! She is loved!

Rev. Scott Rogers - April 04, 2023 at 04:54 PM

AW

I knew Mimi from Trinity Episcopal, the many festivals we worked on together, as my landlady and from whom I bought my first house from on Melrose. Always fun, creative, energetic and a joy to be around. Missing your presence and you made a difference!

Ann Whisenhunt - April 07, 2023 at 11:46 PM

LP

My sisters and I will always remember Mimi as she was a regular at our father's business Quick Copies back in the 80's. Always with a smile and happy outlook she brightened our day when she walked in the door. Seeing her walking everyday on Lakeshore, I would comment that she looked the same in her 80's as she did in her 40's. She will be missed by many. Our condolences go out to the family.

Laurie Pappas - April 08, 2023 at 08:46 AM

MR

Remembering MIMI always brings a smile, as she made everyone around her happy. Her energy was inspiring and made the rest of us want to volunteer as she did. She was an inspiration to me. I send my condolences to the family. Being around MIMI, made you know "God is Good" RIP my friend.

Myra Ramsey - April 13, 2023 at 10:53 AM