



Ruth Mary Johnson

November 29, 1945 - October 3, 2024

Ruth Mary Johnson, 78, of Etna, California, passed from this life on October 3, 2024, in Yreka, California. Born in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England, on November 29, 1945 to Tom and Pam Phillips, Ruth came to America at the age of 3 months old with her mother after the war on a ship full of war brides. They then traveled across America by train to join her father.

Her early childhood was in Rio Linda, California, but in 1955 the Phillips family moved to Eureka, then in 1962 they moved into a country home surrounded by pear orchards in Lake County, where her parents owned a hardware store in Kelseyville. Ruth graduated from Kelseyville High School in June 1963, where she made many friends who she kept in touch with throughout her life and was affectionately known as "Ruthie".

Life took Ruth to the Bay Area for three years to attend business college. During that time she met the love of her life, Carl Donald (Don) Johnson. The couple married on April 5, 1969, and settled in Etna, California, where they have lived ever since. At 23, she not only married but took on the role of instant parent to Don's 4 children. Three years later, she had a son, Lee. Now, with her family of 7, she was dedicated to each and every one. There was never a birthday, Easter, Valentine's Day, or any other holiday that was missed without a card or thoughtful gift. When Ruth's parents moved into Scott Valley just up the road opposite of her in-laws, Carl and Marie Johnson, it added to her already full life. Barbeques and backyard picnics for the whole bunch became an enjoyable family pastime. With her English background, tea time

was a daily ritual. Her favorite place was her backyard at 3 o'clock with her husband and a cup of tea overlooking her garden and the fields of her neighbor and dear friend, Dona Farnam.

Ruth's quest for learning never ceased, returning to college in the '80's, getting an associate's degree with a certificate in business accounting. For many years, besides making a comfortable home, Ruth was involved with bookkeeping for Don's logging and equipment business. She and Don loved to travel, from road trips across the US to cruising the Caribbean and Alaska to skiing in Europe, Canada, Tahoe and Mount Shasta. One particular trip took her back to England for five weeks with her sister Donna and their parents, visiting the home where she was born. She and Don charted thousands of miles during their many motor home trips, exploring the American southwest extensively with a group of RV friends, including Dan & Ginger Renner, Ken & Jeanie Dickinson and others.

She had a love for life with an always positive attitude. She enjoyed genealogy, had a passion for reading, was an avid gardener, skilled at photography, a wonderful cook, was in a Bunco group for many years starting in 1987. One of her most recent ventures was learning the art of beekeeping and was very proud of the success of the first honey harvest this summer, with the help of her Apiary mentors, Sheryl and Rick Wilkins. Most of all was her love and unwavering dedication to her family. She was a compassionate caregiver, devoted to supporting her parents, in-laws and friends in the community who needed assistance. She cared for her mother up until her passing earlier this year at the age of 101.

Additionally, Ruth was an integral part of the Fort Jones Elementary School community. When her grandchildren, Taryn and Logan, started school she worked as the librarian and IT resources person, helping countless children discover the joy of reading. She also became quite a computer whiz at a time when it was rare to have such knowledge.

One of the greatest joys she had was when she was able to interact with her family, especially her grand and great grandchildren. The walls of her home

are a clear testament of that, covered in many, many photos of them all. She was preceded in death by her parents, Tom and Pam Phillips, and her sister, Donna Howland. Ruth is survived by her beloved husband of 55 years, Don; her children Lee Johnson (Janet), Tanny Johnson, Glen Johnson (Stacy), Laurie Johnson (Frank Barbour), Jan Johnson-Awalt (Shawn), as well as her grandchildren, Taryn, Logan, Sam, Joe, Luke, Nicole, her great grandchildren, Dean, Sophia, Boone, Sadie, Paul, Ben, brother in law, Gary Howland and nieces Heather (John) and Holly. Her love and legacy will live on through her family and the many lives she touched--always there, always with a smile. The incredibly bright light and energy she blessed us all with will be deeply missed.

A graveside service will be held on November 9 at 11:00 a.m. at the Fort Jones Cemetery for all to attend, with arrangements by Girdner Funeral Chapel. There will be a gathering afterward at the Fort Jones Catholic Church Parish Hall for a potluck from Noon to 3 pm, to celebrate Ruth's life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Ruth's name to Madrone Hospice.

Tribute Wall

PB

“ Ruth and I met in Lake County in 1966. She worked at the Post Office and I talked her into moving down to Alameda and working in San Francisco. We became fast best friends. Lots of great memories. Of course the best is when she met the love of her life. So glad to have been part of that journey. She was a very special person with a laugh and smile that was infectious. I will surely miss her and the memories always makes me smile. 😎😍 Love Pam Beattie

Pamela Beattie - November 07, 2024 at 12:00 AM

SW

“ Ruth and I worked together for many years at Fort Jones Elementary and we became lifelong friends. We should all aspire to become more like Ruth. She was gracious, compassionate, and very kind to all people. Our latest adventure of beekeeping was one that brought us even closer together. Many beautiful memories.

Sheryl Wilkins - November 07, 2024 at 12:00 AM

GH

“ With loving memories of "Ruth Mary Johnson",

GWENDOLYN HENDRICKS - November 07, 2024 at 12:00 AM

DR

“ Don and Ruth spent many hours and covered many miles traveling each winter with us during the 21 years we RV'd with them. One of their regular rituals was 'tea time at 3:00'. Ruth was 'one of the good ones!' taken too soon, and tremendously missed.

Dan and Ginger Renner - November 06, 2024 at 12:00 AM

DG

“ So very very sorry for Don and the whole family. Please know that Ruth was always a blessing and a delight to be with. Enjoyed bunco with Ruth and Pam. Lots of laughs and fun. ❤️👍❤️👍❤️👍 praying for all.

Doug and Gail - November 05, 2024 at 12:00 AM

EE

“ We are so sorry for your loss. Ruth was always such a sweet and thoughtful person. Our prayers are with you.

Rick and Elaine Eldridge

Elaine Eldridge - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

KP

“ What a testimony of a live well lived.

Kathy Sherman Preszler - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

AJ

“ We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Girdner Funeral Chapel

A Memorial Tree was planted for Ruth Mary Johnson - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

NW

“ My heart goes out to Don and family! May God be kind to all of you in your grief. Love Nolan White

Nolan White - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

LK

“ Condolences to her family.

Linda Keno - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

BS

“ *I am so sorry*

Bob Schultz - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

LT

“ *I first met Ruth at Fort Jones Elementary School and I loved her instantly. She was always positive, kind to others, and never gossiped. She was a real gem. I'm thankful for the short time I knew her. Rest in peace Ruth.*

Lisa Theofanides - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

KN

“ *My deepest condolences to her family and friends.* 🙏🙏

Kristen Naylor - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

KP

“ *Sincere Condolences to the Entire Johnson Family* 🕊️❤️🙏

KimLen Ferreira - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ *So sorry to hear! Blessings to her family!* 🙏

Ann Balmer - November 04, 2024 at 12:00 AM