



Frances Dillon Foley

June 10, 1928 - April 14, 2018

The family of Frances Dillon Foley is heartbroken to announce that she passed away on Saturday April 14, 2018 in Montana with family by her side at the age of 89. She was the third of five children of Robert and Doris Dwyer Dillon of St. Paul, Minnesota. Frances Mary Dillon grew up in the Crocus Hill neighborhood where she attended the Visitation School and graduated from St. Catherine's College in 1950. The Dillon family also enjoyed summers at their home on White Bear Lake. Her father was a prominent citizen of St. Paul who built his company, Dillon Lilly, around his invention of a specialized refrigerator for hospitals. Her mother was an accomplished pianist. In 1954 she married Eugene P. Foley of Wabasha, Minnesota and raised four children.

Frannie was a beautiful and fashionable woman with bright blue eyes; she was a talented artist, a devout Catholic, a caring soul and a wonderful mother and grandmother. Her main art form was marble sculpture which she hand carved into sensuous forms for over 70 years. She won several awards in many juried and group shows and her art is in many private and public collections around the country including the City Hall of Wabasha, MN; the Lutheran Brotherhood Library in Minneapolis; Cretin-Derham High School in St. Paul; St. Joseph's Church in West St. Paul, and the Hockaday Museum of Art in Kalispell, MT. She spent the summer of 1948 working in Glacier National Park which led to her lifelong love of hiking and nature. Along with her love of art and hiking she also enjoyed gardening, cooking, bird watching and curling. Her husband was a longtime advisor to Hubert Humphrey with whom she campaigned. In August 1963 Mr. Foley was appointed by President Kennedy to be the National Administrator of the Small Business Administration and in 1965 President Johnson appointed him to be Special Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development. Frannie enjoyed several private dinners at the Johnson White House and even got a personal tour from President Johnson among other exciting events in 1960's Washington. In 1968 the family moved to Central Park West in NYC and Frannie shared an art studio with several friends in Greenwich Village. In 1970 the family moved to Hastings on Hudson, NY where she was active at the Hastings Gallery and raising the family. In the 1980's she spent 6 months in Pietra Santa, Italy continuing her love and learning of the art of sculpture in the shadow of the Cararra Mountains. In 1986 she moved back to her hometown of St. Paul into the Lowertown

Lofts, live-work apartments for artists that were part of the resurgence of that neighborhood. In 1991 she moved to Somers, Montana on the shores of Flathead Lake to help raise her grandchildren. Frannie continued her craft and was creating some of her most beautiful work into her mid 80's.

Frances was pre-deceased by her husband and three sisters: Catherine Simerson and Roberta Vitelli of St. Paul and Doris Marchuk of Edina; and her brother Robert "Bud" Dillon of St. Paul. She is survived by her daughter Annie Foley of Vineyard Haven, MA; son Bob and his wife Jane of Somers, MT; daughter Margaret Foley of Whitefish, MT; son Paul and his wife Clare of Marion, MA; and her four grandchildren Dillon, Conor, Abbie, and Ellie Foley as well as many adoring nieces and nephews.

A memorial service celebrating her life will be held in the St. Thomas More Church (formerly known as St. Luke's) in which she was baptized and married on Summit Avenue in St. Paul on June 16. If inclined to make a charitable donation in her honor please consider a local arts program or memory loss and wellness program near you.

Comments



“ Thinking of Aunt Frannie , thinking of all the Gene Foley Family during this time of sadden. Love peaches

peaches - April 30, 2018 at 01:27 PM