



Marie Elizabeth Gryder

November 5, 1948 - October 7, 2022

Marie Elizabeth Chilton Gryder, better known as Bitsy, was released from her earthly bonds on Friday, October 7, 2022. She is preceded in her heavenly arrival by her parents, John Morgan & Betty Jane Dorrough Chilton of Oak Ridge, TN and her brother John Thomas Chilton of Greenville, TN. She is survived by her beloved husband of fifty-three years Joseph Edward Gryder of Dayton, TN, her sister Virginia Jane Chilton of Grants, NM, her brother-in-love Danny Coyle of Grants, NM, her sister-in-love Carol Reeder Chilton of Greenville, TN, as well as her daughter Lorilei Danielle Gryder Dreibelbis of Dayton, TN, her son-in-love Christopher M. Dreibelbis of Dayton, TN, her son Joseph Emmet Gryder of Arnold, MD, her daughter-in-love Melissa A. Gryder of Arnold, MD, her grandchildren John Theodore Dreibelbis, Helena Gabrielle Gryder, Izabelle Yve Dreibelbis, and Jonathan Elijah Gryder, her nieces, nephews and their spouses, her grandnieces, and countless other friends who became family over the years.

After graduating from Oak Ridge High School, Bitsy's collegiate career began at Birmingham Southern University, moved to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, where she pledged to Delta Zeta sorority, and culminated in a Bachelor of Arts in Education from California State University at Fullerton. She continued as an alumna advisor to the Iota Upsilon chapter of Delta Zeta in several leadership roles for many years as well as serving in multiple chair positions for the Orange County Alumni Chapter of Delta Zeta empowering countless women in their pursuit of life-long learning. Later her service moved

to the national level, ultimately giving many years as chair for the Graduate Student Scholarship Committee of Delta Zeta delivering the opportunity for scores of women to improve their lives and their communities through higher education.

Bitsy was a Girl Scout as both a girl and adult for over fifteen years, as well as a Cub Scout leader for her son. A part of a Trailblazer troop in Oak Ridge, TN, she was chosen to represent her council in the 1965 Senior Girl Scout Roundup, the last international gathering of girl members organized by GSUSA, where her patrol helped to write songs and ceremonies still used by Girl Scouts today. As an adult, she served as a troop leader and adult mentor at many levels in Orange County, CA for not only her daughter, but many other girls who benefitted from her loving mentorship.

It is a testament to her rock-solid love that Bitsy celebrated fifty-three years of marriage that saw her husband serve active duty in Vietnam as well as over thirty years of policework in the city of Los Angeles. She dedicated the prime years of her adult life to the service of her family, actively supporting her husband's career and the communities he served. A true partner, Bitsy was key in organizing several professional conferences for the Los Angeles Police Protective League. In 1989 she was recognized as Volunteer of the Year by the commander of the 6th Army and named a Woman of the Decade for the 1990's in Who's Who in recognition for her contributions to the Family Support Unit manuals that establish procedures to support the families of our fighting men and women in crisis – a manual still used today to empower our military personnel to serve with confidence that their families and loved ones are safe. Bitsy, with her husband, joined the Single Action Shooting Society (SASS) in 1987 as a founding member. Known as Lady Rebel #550, she not only competed as a lady shooter, but also brought her life-long love of learning to thousands of children with over ten years of hands-on history in "Kid's Korral", a feature of the SASS End of Trail annual competition. In 2010 she was inducted into the SASS Cowboy Action Hall of Fame in recognition of her contributions that embodied her passion for preserving our Great American

Culture and promoting the Spirit of the Game well beyond the boundaries of the shooting range.

After living in California for over forty years, Bitsy returned to Tennessee in 2006 to care for her mother. In her unquenchable passion for service, she became a Master Gardener, served as secretary and treasurer for her HOA, led in several positions of the American Legion Women's Auxiliary of Dayton, volunteered with the election commission to devotedly work the polls of Rhea County, and took an active role in the Rhea County Republican Party including serving on the executive committee in several positions, most recently as president.

Beyond any of these recognitions of her public service, Bitsy is most remembered as a gracious and loving hostess, a beloved wife, and a devoted mother and grandmother. Friends and peers remember her as genuine and hard-working, blessing many with home-cooked meals and her hand-made textiles through the years. She welcomed not only her family into her heart and home, but offered food, advice, and assistance to her sorority sisters, her Girl Scout girls, her friends' children, her children's friends, and many a wayward traveler over the years, both human and canine. She absolutely meant every word of "for better or for worse, but not for lunch", "let me help you with your math", and "I love you."

Bitsy's life will be consecrated with a funeral at 4 pm Friday, October 14th at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 123 S. Jackson Street, Athens, TN 37303. The family will host a Celebration of Life from 11:00 am – 1:30 pm on Saturday, October 15th at Vanderwall Funeral Home, 164 Maple Street, Dayton, TN 37321 with interment at Buttram Historic Cemetery to follow later in the day. In lieu of flowers, please honor Bitsy with a donation in her name to the Delta Zeta Foundation General Scholarship Fund OR the educational organization of your choice that furthers the light of learning.

Please share your memories and photos of Marie on her online guest register at www.vanderwallfh.com.

The family is being cared for by Vanderwall Funeral Home in Dayton, TN.

Cemetery Details

Buttram Cemetery

Rhea County Hwy
Dayton, TN

Previous Events

Funeral Service

OCT **14**. 4:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
123 S Jackson Street
Athens, TN 37303

Celebration of Life

OCT **15**. 11:00 AM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Vanderwall Funeral Home
164 Maple St
Dayton, TN 37321
(423) 775-2662

Burial

OCT **15** (ET)

Buttram Cemetery
Rhea County Hwy
Dayton, TN

Tribute Wall



“ *Meat & Cheese Wooden Gift Crate was purchased for the family of Marie Elizabeth Gryder.*



October 14, 2022 at 03:35 PM



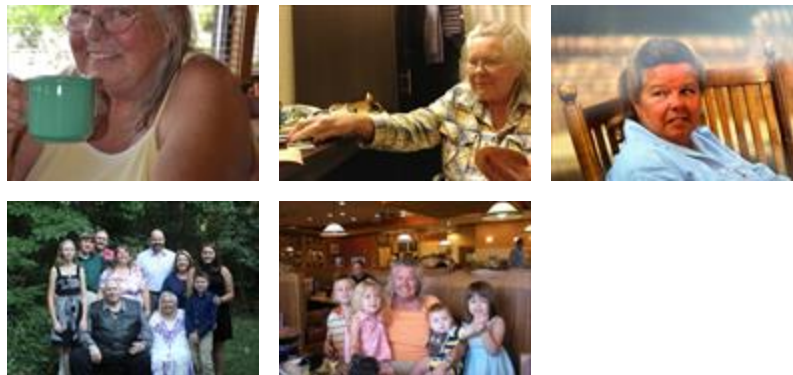
“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Sara Chilton Clausen - October 14, 2022 at 12:27 PM



“ *33 files added to the album Memories Album*



Vanderwall Funeral Home, Inc. - October 13, 2022 at 10:16 AM

LT

“ Bitsy was my friend. Such a warm, smart, funny and loving person. I could always count on her to help, offer solid counsel, or just listen. She set many great examples but her most profound was love of family. She was very, very good to me, as she was to everyone. Fly high dear friend in your heavenly home. Joe, i love you both. It blesses me daily to know you and sweet Bitsy. As I have recently told you, y'all are good, good people. My thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time.



Laura

Laura Travis - October 12, 2022 at 02:17 PM

NU

“ Thanks Mom for being a shoulder, a mother and any support when I was far from my known life. For teaching me how to cook fudge, stroganoff and dirty rice. For your smile, always. For being there. I will always remember you and miss you. I'm so happy for being able to spend some days with you this summer. I love you. Always. Nuria



Nuria - October 11, 2022 at 04:55 PM



Lorlei Dreibelbis - October 13, 2022 at 12:26 PM

MC

“ Who knew 30+ years ago that these two women would be sisters of the heart. When we met it was a clash of wills, methods, & temperament. We soon found out we really were a lot alike, and our methods were similar. Projects came our way, and we teamed up to make them/it the best they could be.



One day she asked if I played bridge, me, cards yes, bridge no. So, I along with a couple of other Delta Zeta's sat in Bitsy living room evening after evening learning the game from a master. Shortly after that I was asked to become a Delta Zeta & with Bitsy's support and guidance that is just what happened. We became partners in bridge and had a blast. We worked on fundraisers, dinners, meetings, traveled together, & talked about everything. Laughed about many more things than we should have. Over the years we saw our children grow into wonderful adults with families of their own. We had pride in each other's accomplishments both private & personal.

When things were going well, we celebrated. When they went south, we cried with each other. We told each other things knowing they would go no further. She was an honest woman, in a world where honesty is not highly valued, and I knew I could trust her with anything.

As I said, she was - is a sister of my heart. I look at that smiling face, so full of love and totally herself and my heart breaks that she is no longer with us. I know her faith in herself, Jody, her children & grandchildren allowed her to be the best Bitsy, always.

Personally, I treasured our time together, our phone calls, & just knowing she was there if I needed her.

So, my friend, rest well with the angels, and if they ask you to clean the floors in heaven, sweep a light dusting my way, OK?.

P.

Margaret/Peggy Caffey - October 11, 2022 at 04:26 PM



Lorilei Dreibelbis - October 13, 2022 at 12:25 PM

MC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Margaret/Peggy Caffey - October 11, 2022 at 04:05 PM

MC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Margaret/Peggy Caffey - October 11, 2022 at 04:04 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Marie Elizabeth Gryder.



October 11, 2022 at 01:54 PM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Marie Elizabeth Gryder.* ”



October 11, 2022 at 09:03 AM