



## Joan Hetland

April 3, 1928 - May 9, 2022

Joan Marie McCabe Hetland, 94, beloved wife of the late Duane Edward Hetland, passed away in peace on May 9th, 2022. She knew in her heart the abiding love of family and friends and, most importantly, the everlasting love of the Lord.

She is survived by her four children, daughters Veronica (Frank) Buckman and Rebecca (Dan) Pettigrew, and sons Richard (Christine) Hetland and Scott (Kerrin) Hetland, as well as fifteen grand-children and seven great-grandchildren.

Joan was born April 3, 1928 in St. Paul, MN to her loving parents, the late John Clifford McCabe and Eleanor Anna Ascher. She is survived by brother John (Doris) McCabe, as well as many wonderful nieces and nephews.

She is predeceased by loving siblings Kathryn (Robert) Collins; Evelyn (Louie) Gellerman; Edward (Leah) McCabe and William (Claudia) McCabe.

Joan grew up in a lively home filled with love and a strong work ethic, often accompanied by music and song. She had a talent for the piano and learned quickly to play by ear. A jazzy version of "Up a Lazy River" was her best. Over time it became her signature tune.

The McCabe family loved telling stories, and Joan had many. She remembers her father's twinkling blue Irish eyes as he'd lead the family in song, with Eleanor (whom Joan called the saint of the family) humming along. They'd sing in the car and they'd sing doing chores. Joan would accompany younger brother John on the piano in later years to keep up spirits.

Their grandmother, Matilda – mother of Eleanor - was the original owner of the family home and lived with them for several years. Joan once wrote a story about her.

She was a savvy and fashionable woman, Joan says, making lovely hats with peacock feathers and taking in boarders to help make ends meet. Times were tough for the young McCabe couple, but Matilda helped provide.

Joan recalls how they'd pack up Matilda's big green Chevy with Joan's father (a mechanic, thank goodness) driving. Mother sat in the front seat with baby Edward on her lap. Matilda, Kathryn, Evelyn and Joan squeezed together in the back seat, along with the chamber pot, a picnic basket and a jug of lemonade.

Their favorite destination was Rush City, MN – about 60 miles north of St. Paul - where Matilda's relatives owned several acres of farmland and lots of animals. It was truly the country. The girls wore matching outfits Eleanor made herself, all from the same pattern but with different prints, and brand-new saddle shoes from Montgomery Ward.

They'd of course sing all the way, with her father leading on "Oh You Beautiful Doll", "Shine on Harvest Moon", "In My Merry Oldsmobile" and a hundred more.

To Joan the country was heaven, and there wasn't anything better than Aunt Katie's breakfast table "with fresh coffee brewing, bacon an inch thick, fresh raspberry jelly on toast made on the big black stove grill with eggs busting with bright yellow yolks just staring up at you off the platter sized plate".

"Why did the tomatoes and cucumbers always taste better, and the chicken fried in bacon grease taste so delicious and the gravy on mounds of whipped potatoes just slide down your throat and the green beans brighter than ever", she wondered?

Joan was only seven years old when Matilda died, but the strong woman left an indelible mark on her senses, mind and spirit.

Joan loved her brothers and sisters. She said those McCabe kids had a lot to offer: Of her sister Kitty, Joan remembers a spirited and talented girl unafraid to lead. Of her sister Evelyn, Joan remembers a sweet and discerning girl who liked good books and movies. Of brother Ed, Joan remembers a smart boy with charisma, charm and determination. Of brother John, Joan remembers a handsome, athletic boy of many achievements. Of brother Billy, who passed away as a young man, Joan remembers utter love and devotion. She came to love all her in-laws too.

Joan loved life! She was vivacious, fun, creative and eager to move forward. We remember her as a beautiful woman at each age – with common-sense, wisdom and grace, a harsh critic at times, yet unafraid to speak her mind.

Her childhood home on Selby Avenue indeed held so many memories for Joan - especially since she lived there into her twenties and early thirties, working to help support her younger siblings after the death of her father. But before that, Eleanor and Jack – as her daddy was known – encouraged Joan

to pursue many of her dreams.

Joan's first job was as a stock girl folding merchandise at Rothchild Department Store. She was only 14 years old but already liked clothing and fashion.

She then spent a summer working at Swift and Company in South St. Paul – the nation's largest meat processing plant at the time. She remembers waking up before morning's light to catch the streetcar, then working in the cold factory wearing a hair net and heavy apron while chopping and packaging beef on the line. Definitely hard work, but Joan found it exhilarating all the same.

Joan graduated from John Marshall High School in 1946. She adored singing in the choir and learning great literature and poetry. She was a fantastic dancer and was asked out by lots of boys.

She recalled a few dates that went askew - like when she took the wheel of a boyfriend's father's luxury car and hit a curb. Later, when she could afford to, she purchased her own car - a classy convertible. She loved to drive.

After graduating Joan entered the University of Minnesota but left after a semester, ready to get on with her career. After a job working as a draft artist for the engineers at the phone company, she went back to Rothchild's as a merchandising manager.

The store at the time carried exquisite clothing (it was originally called Young-Quinlan). Joan excelled at helping women find perfectly tailored shirts, slacks, skirts, dresses and coats. She started dressing well and enjoying small purchases of sculptures and art pieces that are even more valuable today.

Also - no doubt because of her loveliness, grace and poise – Joan was selected by Rothchild's as a Snow Princess for the historic St. Paul Winter Festival. Her tiara became a dress-up toy for her daughters later on, and they found it magical.

Also shortly after high school, Joan convinced her father that joining her friend to travel to New York to visit the friend's sister would be a good way to expand her resume. As a city girl, Joan felt confident that she could make it in New York and wanted to give it a go.

Finding a job wasn't easy, though. Fortunately, a hiring manager at Bonwit Teller & Co. on Park Avenue was impressed by Joan's early education in Catholic grade schools. She hired her as a counter girl in high-end hats and gloves. Eventually the NY life took its toll, and Joan came back to the Midwest.

One of the highlights of Joan's life before she met her wonderful husband, Duane, was a two-week road trip from Minnesota, through Missouri and Texas along historic Route 66 with two of her girlfriends.

They were in their early twenties at the time, but one of the friends apparently had a good job as a pharmacist and was also a great planner. Joan recalls memorable stops along the way, including the awe-inspiring Carlsbad Cavern National Park in New Mexico.

Then, traveling up California to Carmel-by-the-Sea, Joan was struck by the quaint beauty of the cottages in the villages of Monterey. It was a look she incorporated into a home she would design for Duane and the kids in New Brighton, MN.

The trip continued with a glorious drive all the way up the California coast,

through gorgeous Oregon to the Sun Valley Lodge in Idaho. While her friends were out riding horses, she stayed back at the Lodge bar and was quite certain she exchanged greetings with Ernest Hemingway himself.

The journey ended in Alberta, Canada. Joan drove with her friends to the famous Fairmount Chateau at Lake Louise for lunch. As the grand hotel came into view Joan was immediately struck by the vivid red poppies blanketing the grounds. She would never forget the majesty of the glacier and sparkling lake against the backdrop of palatial hotel. To her it was like a poem.

By the late 1950's Joan settled into her retail career, accepting a job with the large Montgomery Ward Department Store. As women's clothing manager she was in charge of purchasing and managing her department.

In 1960 she met a handsome young man who was hired as her manager, Duane Hetland. She'd waited many years for the right guy and here he was!

She went up to introduce herself and ask for more help on her floor. Right away the sparks flew, and they were married on Flag Day, June 14th, 1961. Four children soon followed, as did more adventures.

As Duane moved up the ladder of Ward's, he was asked to move his family many times. Joan steadfastly held everything together as they ascended the ranks through years in Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Connecticut and New Hampshire.

As adults Joan's children now understand the lengths their Mom went through to make sure they adjusted, did well in school, and had every opportunity to excel. She and Duane were an amazing team.

Joan also worked to ensure her children were brought up in the Catholic faith, and she and Duane sacrificed to send their kids to Catholic colleges. They lived their values of love, devotion and personal responsibility every day despite any tough times or arguments.

In addition to caring for her family over the years, Joan worked as a real estate agent for Red Carpet in the Chicago area and as a researcher/surveyor for the University of Michigan while she and Duane resided in New Hampshire.

She was an active member of various women's clubs, including the Fairfield Newcomers Club in CT and the Bedford Women's Club in NH. Even in retirement in Palm Coast, FL, Joan welcomed all new residents by founding the Matanzas Shores Women's Club, which she helped preside over for several terms.

Duane and Joan also spent many of the twenty-three years they lived in Palm Coast playing golf, seeing old friends, and playing bridge.

As the years passed, they slowed down considerably, finding greatest pleasure in watching their family blossom and bloom. They were absolutely, totally in love with their little great-grandchildren!

We know their greatest legacy is the gift of LOVE, which we hold gratefully in our hearts forever. We are truly Blessed!

The Hetland, Pettigrew and Buckman families thank all who called Joan and sent letters and loving thoughts and prayers after she lost Duane. They made her smile and meant so much.

She showed great inner strength as her body grew weaker, and daughter

Veronica will always treasure the last three years she was able to care for her. Without that special time, she'd never have heard the precious stories she can now recount for posterity.

Veronica was also able to memorize Mom's favorite poem, *Sea Fever* (1902) by John Masefield. She recited it for Joan the evening before she passed:

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and sky,  
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;  
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,  
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide  
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;  
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,  
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the seagulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,  
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's like a whetted knife;  
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,  
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

The funeral for Joan Marie McCabe Hetland will be held on Tuesday, May 31st at 10 a.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Alpharetta Ga.

The funeral Mass will be recorded and it will be posted on the Northside Chapel website after the service.

In lieu of flowers you may make a donation to Mary's Place in Pittsburgh PA – a special home for vulnerable pregnant women and children - in Joan's name. Please visit [marysplacepgh.org](http://marysplacepgh.org), or send a check to Mary's Place, at: Mary's

Place, 2905 Castlegate Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15226. God Bless!

There will also be a memorial Mass and service at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Palm Coast, FL, in September or October for the interment of the ashes of Duane and Joan Hetland into the parish columbarium. They were parishioners there for over twenty years and loved their church.

# Previous Events

## LiveStream

MAY 31. 10:00 AM.

Livestream: <https://www.facebook.com/NCFHLIVE>

## Memorial Mass

MAY 31. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church  
535 Rucker Road  
Alpharetta, GA

# Tribute Wall



“ *Northside Chapel Funeral Directors and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Joan Hetland* ”



---

**Northside Chapel** - May 31, 2022 at 03:56 PM



“ *Joan Hetland* ”

---

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM