



Thelma Laurel Collins

January 6, 1926 - December 9, 2020

Thelma L. Collins, 94, died Dec. 9, 2020, in Vancouver, WA. Thelma Laurel Bangen was born Jan. 6, 1926, in Sanish, ND. She was the sixth of seven children born to Anton and Sara Bangen.

She received her early education in a little one-room schoolhouse and graduated from Sanish High School in 1944. Upon graduation, she was admitted to Trinity Hospital School of Nursing, Minot, ND. As it was war time, she was accepted under the government-sponsored Nurse's Cadet Corps to receive free training in return for the promise to serve one year in military service upon graduation, but by the time she graduated from training, the war was over so she was released from her military commitment.

In 1948, she married Michael Alfred Collins, a salesman for the Westinghouse Corporation. Shortly afterward, Mike was transferred to Walla Walla, WA, where their son, Michael Patrick, was born. Three years later, 1952, they moved to Vancouver, where their daughter, Gail Kathleen, was born.

The Collins family moved often, including a four-year stint in Alaska. Wherever they went, there was always a hospital that needed nurses, so Thelma never lacked for a job. In 1967, they moved back to Vancouver where Thelma began working for Vancouver Memorial Hospital until her retirement. They bought a home in Hazel Dell which they lived in until about 1980, when they moved into

the Meadow Verde Mobile Home Park. After Mike died in 1988, Thelma continued to live in her home until August 2020.

Thelma loved children and acted as frequent caregiver for her great-grandkids up until a few months before she ended up in the hospital. She was an avid reader, enjoyed travel, taking many trips throughout the US and Canada, and she was one of the best pie bakers anywhere. She was blessed with good health, loved to walk and especially enjoyed her cats and her wonderful neighbors.

In August 2020, Thelma fell and was hospitalized, and spent some time in a rehab center. Upon her release, she lived with her grandson, Sean, and his girlfriend, Heather, until her death.

Thelma was predeceased by her husband, parents, and sisters and brothers, Harriet, Howard, Ruth, Arvid, Reuben and Lee. She is survived by her son, Michael; daughter, Gail Spence; grandson, Sean Spence; granddaughters, Emily Spence and Alex King; three great-grandchildren, Laurel, Malach and James; as well as many nieces and nephews who will miss her dearly.

There will be no service. Evergreen Memorial Gardens will handle the cremation.