



Mary Lou Brown

September 6, 1943 - November 22, 2021

After a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease, Mary Lou Brown, 78 of Laguna Hills, California, passed away in the early morning on Monday, November 22, 2021. With her passing, our world shines a little less brightly as she was a glowing example of love, selflessness, compassion and faith. Her life and all that she gave to this world was cut short by this disease. She is missed more than any words can describe.

As written in her own words in her scrapbook, "I was born like any other child." Indeed, she was, Mary Lou was born in Riverside, California at 10:51 am on Monday the 6th day of September 1943 to Iva Ange and Earl "aka Tony" Ray Forbes, both originally from Iowa. She was 7 pounds and 8 ounces of pure joy.

Iva and Mary Lou moved back to Iowa after Tony was stationed in Hawaii to await Army orders to head overseas during the war. Mary Lou was raised in Iowa with her only sibling, her younger brother, Curtis Ray Forbes who was born a few years after her, July 25, 1945. she wrote "I had a brother also who always horned in on pictures." She loved Curtis dearly. Mary Lou wrote that she had a wonderful childhood, "mother and dad made me feel so loved." She carried this love forward for years to come.

Mary Lou attended Central Elementary where she was an enthusiastic student

and happily self-described as a “teacher’s pet.” She attended Nevada Junior High School, Nevada, Iowa grades 7th and 8th from 1956 to 1957 and graduated from Nevada High School at age 17 on May 23, 1961. She then attended Waldorf Junior College, Forest City, Iowa and graduated on May 26, 1963, with an Associate in Arts degree, Liberal Arts. Mary Lou would come back to California along with her folks where she eventually met her love, Roger Brown. Mary Lou and Roger were married on March 21st, 1970. Together they raised their two children, Tracey and Timothy. Upon Roger’s passing on February 8, 2021, Roger and Mary Lou were married 50 years, 10 months and 17 days.

A few particulars you may not know about Mary Lou, she loved to dance. She attended a dance school starting at a young age for ballet and tap. “I could have danced all night,” she wrote in her scrapbook. She loved music and singing. She started in band in 6th grade and continued in band all the way through high school. She joined choir her senior year of high school and went on to participate in the Waldorf Junior College choir. She started singing in church at a young age. There are numerous memories of Mary Lou singing church hymns in full vibrato voice so beautifully at our church.

Christmas time was always filled with wonderful music and holiday carols. Christmas time was a festive time at the Brown home and Mary Lou absolutely loved the holidays. The sounds of her favorite Elvis Christmas hits, the Carpenters Christmas Portrait and other holiday classics and carols were always spinning on the record player as the Brown family celebrated the Christmas spirit.

You may not know that Mary Lou aspired to be an elementary school teacher. She was the secretary of the Future Teachers of America National Education Association in high school. She was in the Order of Rainbow all 4 years of high school learning about leadership through community service. She had

hopes of attending Iowa State Teachers College to prepare to be an Iowa Elementary Teacher. During her high school years, she also taught Bible school and Sunday school which fostered a love for teaching and working with children which was passed down to her daughter who also started tutoring children in her younger years and went on to become a teacher.

Mary Lou focused on raising her children which altered her path to becoming a credentialed teacher. However, she eventually returned to the education field and working with children by becoming an instructional aid. She worked as an instructional aid with the Orange Unified School District from October 1982 until retirement in August 2009. She began her instructional aid career at Lampson Elementary School, then transferred to Canyon Hills School working with kids with special needs which was her true calling. She was amazing with the kids, and she absolutely adored working with the students at Canyon Hills School. She was deeply passionate about her work. She cared genuinely about the students and saw only amazing qualities, potential and love inside of each.

Mary Lou grew up in a very caring household that valued the home and family, but most importantly Mary Lou's mother Iva taught Mary Lou the insignificance of material things and selflessness. Mary Lou was the ultimate caregiver and if angels do walk among us on earth, Mary Lou fit the bill to a tee.

Mary Lou was very involved in her local church. She and Roger were members of the First United Methodist Church of Orange and remained long time members until moving to Corona, California where they became members of their local Corona United Methodist Church. Mary Lou also brought her love of working with Children to the Methodist church. She volunteered often and was an active Sunday school teacher for many years at the First United Methodist Church of Orange.

Mary Lou never stopped singing, and loving music. She continued to attend and sing her hymns in church until she was no longer able to do so. Up until her very last weeks on this earth, she would tap her “dancing” feet to the jukebox sounds of a great 50’s swing, ballads or trusted Elvis classics during our visits.

Memories of our mom include wonderful holiday celebrations, arts and crafts, spectacular birthday parties and amazing cooking and baking. Mary Lou was hands down an amazing cook. Her mom Iva, also an amazing cook, suffered from lifelong health issues. During a rough spell in Mary Lou’s childhood where Iva was too sick and weak to handle all the work in the home, Mary Lou stepped in to assist her mother and it was at this point in her life she learned to cook.

And boy did she learn to cook and bake! Ask any neighbors and friends that grew up around the Brown household what they remember most about Mrs. Brown. Hands down, it will be the food, baked sweet treats and amazing parties. The food was always prepared with love and joy and to this day the smell and aroma of turkey roasting on Christmas morning, mash potatoes, green bean casserole simmering, pumpkin and apple pies baking in the oven and all the amazing cooking brings a warm heart. She baked and cooked wonderful dinners and invited our friends over to enjoy this food together. Our meals were always shared with our friends, neighbors and loved ones.

The tuna melt in the oven was a big hit, the cheese ball and the ultimate Cheese Shrimp dip were delicious. The Cheese Shrimp dip remains a hit to this day as it was passed on to us kids to continue the tradition. There were chocolate pies, magic bars, snickerdoodles and amazing homemade chocolate chip cookies... all made with love and abundance to share with others. No one ever left the Brown’s without a full belly or with a “to go, care

package” of leftovers.

Mary Lou invited our entire elementary school classes including teachers to our birthday parties. Our parties were organic, creative, most everything hand crafted or handmade and were 100% irreplaceable memories. Halloween was an exciting time which included pumpkin carving, hand-made costumes, and ghoulish fun and delight. Tracey and Tim could never forget their hand made Princess Lea and Luke Skywalker costumes with lightsaber made of a flashlight hilt, cardboard blade and full Princess Lea buns for Tracey... It was amazing and a hundred times cooler than store-bought costumes.

We were very blessed to have such an amazing, fun, patient, creative and loving mom. Other examples of Mary Lou’s creativity and party planning are the numerous times when Mary Lou volunteered as a room mom for our classrooms and put together holiday parties for the entire class, preparing all the food, crafts and party favors with her mother (Grandma Iva) for every student in the class. Let’s just say that the kids loved being in Tracey and or Tim’s class because Mary Lou was the best room mom.

A few additional tidbits about Mary Lou, she was a Girl Scout, she played Clarinet in Band, she was a proficient typist as a teenager, awarded a certificate of recognition in High School, “she listed her favorite class as Typing Class,” she loved dogs and animals, she always had a good sense of humor, was not set in her ways, she attended a Lutheran church growing up, she believed God’s love was for all unconditionally, she was open minded, open to other’s beliefs, she loved the movie The Sound of Music, she loved a good cup of coffee, she loved the old style homes in old town Orange, California (near the First United Methodist Church of Orange), she loved to garden, grow flowers, roses and fruits and vegetables including tomatoes and home grown pumpkins which was a favorite,

She made a delicious homemade pumpkin pie from the pumpkins the family did not carve at Halloween, her love of God never wavered, she never asked for anything or expected lavish gifts (THOUGH SHE DESERVED THAT AND MORE), Mary Lou never conveyed to have all the RIGHT answers but she treated others as you would like to be treated, with compassion and empathy. Mary Lou was also feisty, a little stubborn at times and she could stand firm when it was called for and without a doubt, I am confident Ms. Mary Lou broke a few rules back in her day and lived, she most definitely passed this down to her son.

There is no memory of Mary Lou judging, no ego to speak of, and I am confident in stating that those who knew her would only remember being surrounded by her warmth. Mary Lou made our family feel like the richest family in the neighborhood, not in wealth but rich in love. She gave to her kids exactly what her mother provided for her, a home full of love and a truly wonderful childhood.

Mary Lou and Roger are together among the stars and in peace. If indeed Angels are among the stars, in the presence of God, and the everlasting Universe, our mother has surely earned her wings and her place among them. Mary Lou's time on this earth was much too short for all the love she had to give, she is greatly missed and will never be forgotten by her daughter and son and all that knew her.

We feel like we have lost you twice mom, to a devastating disease and now to the heavens...and knowing now the finality that you are no longer physically here to sit with and feel the warmth that radiated from you is a loss beyond words. We miss you Mom.

Mary Lou Brown is survived by her children, Tracey and husband Adam; Timothy and his wife Natalie; and Mary Lou's grandchildren, Gavin and Kaelyn; Bella and Jake.

A thank you to Joyful Home Residential Care in Laguna Hills for taking such great care of Mary Lou during these last years and thank you to Joyful Homes and Senior Hospice for your support during her final days.

Mary Lou will be laid to rest with Roger at the Riverside National Cemetery, 22495 Van Buren Blvd. Riverside, CA 92518. The family will be holding a private burial and ceremony on March 16th at 10:00am. In lieu of flowers, a suggested memorial donation would be to Canyon Hills School to inquire about fundraising needs by reaching out to canyonhillsprincipal@orangeusd.org.

Tribute Wall



“ Reflecting on Memories created a Tribute Video in memory of Mary Lou Brown



Reflecting on Memories - February 01, 2022 at 10:29 PM



A beautiful and spirited life she lived. I so enjoyed sharing grandmothering with her. I truly can say I wished I had known her years before I did. A beautiful human being who I will always remember.

Ann Trolinger - February 04, 2022 at 02:11 PM

TB

“ missing our mom on this Mother's Day. The best mom ever!

timscottbrown1 Brown - May 14, 2023 at 01:08 PM



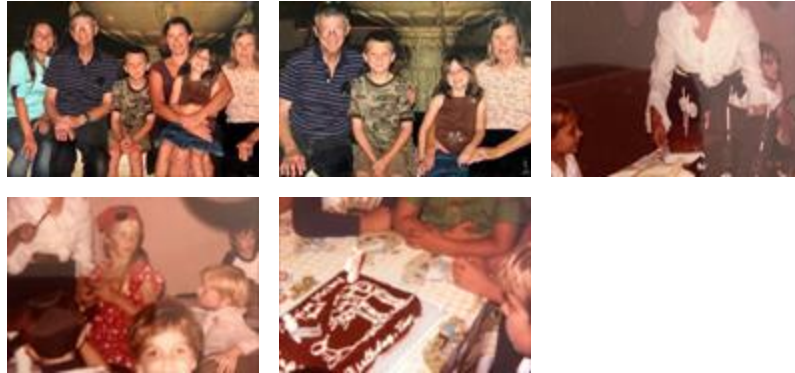
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Reflecting on Memories - February 06, 2022 at 02:13 AM



“ 53 files added to the album *Brown Family Memories Album*



Reflecting on Memories - February 01, 2022 at 10:28 PM

TB

“ 1 file added to the album



timscottbrown1 Brown - February 01, 2022 at 12:56 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



timscottbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:33 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album *Mary Lou with Tracey & Tim*



timscttobrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:31 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album *Mary Lou with Tracey & Tim*



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timscttobrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:29 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album *Mary Lou with Mom & Dad Forbes*



timscttobrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:26 PM

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“ 3 files added to the album *Mary Lou & Roger*



timscttobrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:19 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album *What a Cutie!*



timscottbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:15 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album *High School days!*



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timscoffbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:10 PM

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timscoffbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:09 PM

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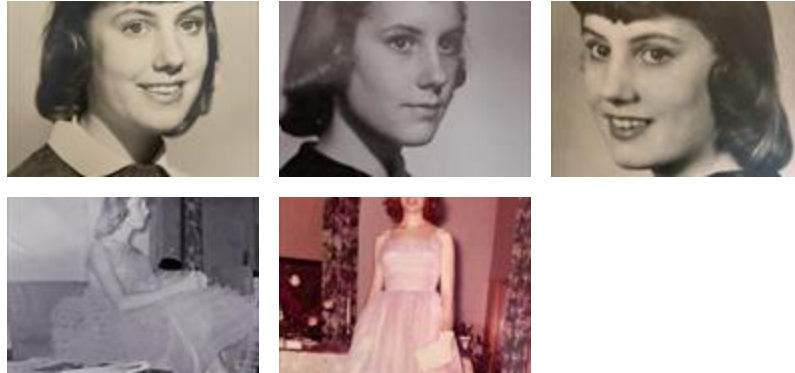
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timscoffbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:09 PM

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“ 9 files added to the album High School days!



timscottbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:08 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album Music and Dance



timscottbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 07:07 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



timscottbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 01:05 PM

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“ 4 files added to the album *What a Cutie!*



timscoffbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 12:25 PM

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“ 8 files added to the album *Music and Dance*



timscoffbrown1 Brown - January 28, 2022 at 12:22 PM