



Rosemary Penelope Rees

April 19, 2021

Rosemary Penelope Rees, 93, passed away Monday, April 19, 2021 in Venice, Florida USA.

She was born May 4th, 1927 in London United Kingdom to Alexander Fowler Wyncoll and Frances Caroline Wyncoll Cooke.

The family relocated to Jamaica where her father was part of British Army regiment and lived there until she was 10, all returning to the UK in 1937. She attended Babington House, a private girl's school with her sister Angela. WWII ended in 1945 a few days after Rosemary's 18th birthday. She decided to become a doctor and took courses at the London Matriculation Exams and was accepted at the Royal Free Hospital in London.

She met her future husband, Jack Rees, who had returned to study medicine after the war at a university dance. She married on July 24th, 1948 and Melanie was born on June 14th, 1949. Jack graduated when Melanie was 2 and started his internships. This ultimately led to relocation to Ipoh, Malaya in 1952 and then in 1955 they moved to Singapore where Jack opened, The Straits Clinic on Middle road, a medical practice. Gareth was born on August 25, 1956.

In September of 1962, Jack, Rosemary and Gareth relocated to Sydney Australia. Melanie followed in August 1963. Rosemary returned to her Medical

school studies at Sydney University. In 1965, she graduated with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biochemistry and Microbiology and offered a job as Tutor in the Anatomy Department.

In 1971 Rosemary relocated with her son Gareth to St. Louis, Missouri, US to attend Washington University. She graduated in 1975 with her PHD in Anatomy. She was offered a job at National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland doing research on spinal cord regeneration. In 1976 she was offered a job teaching anatomy at University of Maryland in Baltimore. In 1979 she was offered a job teaching anatomy to female medical students at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia. In 1985 she relocated to the island of Monserrat in the Caribbean to teach anatomy to medical students. In 1988 she returned to the University of Maryland in Baltimore teaching anatomy and was voted the best lecturer during her tenure.

In 2008 she began teaching anatomy at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USC). She helped train the future graduates for service to the U.S. at home and abroad in the medical corps as medical professionals, nurses, and physicians.

In 2015 she retired from the medical field after 50 years of teaching anatomy. She estimates she had taught anatomy to more than 12,000 medical students around the globe. She relocated from Rockville, Maryland to Venice, Florida to be closer to her son Gareth.

She kept busy volunteering at the Venice Theater sewing costumes for the actors and taking long walks down Venice Ave to Venice Beach. She was an avid knitter making outfits for her grandchildren and great grandchildren on a weekly basis. She had a passion for growing orchids in Florida and always open to helping others with orchids in need of help. She was an avid traveler and estimated she has circumvented the globe 8 times during her lifetime.

Rosemary is survived by daughter Melanie Seymour of Chiswick, London UK; her son Gareth of Venice Florida; grandchildren Thomas Seymour of Melbourne, Australia; Elizabeth Seymour of Shepherds Bush, London, UK; great grandchildren Finn, Clementine, Camille and Peter.

To Sign her online guest book, visit Toalebrothers.com

Tribute Wall

NW

“ Reflections on a life long friend ---

"Writing something meaningful about a friendship of nearly 50 years is almost impossible to do. Rosemary and I met at Washington University as I was finishing my PhD and she had just begun her PhD journey. We became friends and during our time together before I left for a position in Chicago, we began taking family trips with her son Gareth and my husband George and son Brian around Missouri. Over the years, as Rosemary and I traveled to different locations throughout the US, some as family ventures, others to simply visit a new location, we always found a way to engage in activities that strengthened our friendship and gave opportunity to enjoy each other's company. As well, we were fortunate to travel together to many places throughout the world, largely through the Road Scholar Program. Trips included visits to countries like Brazil, Bhutan, Ecuador, Easter Island, Galapagos, Chile, Mexico (two or three times), Myanmar, Spain, and the Greek Islands. Over these 50 years, Rosemary and I both worked as academic medical school faculty, where teaching anatomy was our first love. She finished her last medical school teaching stint at age 89, and I am still working part time at the University of Colorado School of Medicine at the age of 82. More recently, Rosemary and I had been utilizing Facetime on a weekly basis to catch up on our activities and simply to stay in touch. Rosemary will be greatly missed by me, my family, as well as my extended family; all who knew her well. She was simply a one-of-a-kind person in my life. This is the kind of friend one keeps near and dear to the heart and considers oneself lucky to have found such a person in life."

*Norma, George and Brian Wagoner
Denver, Colorado*

Norma Elizabeth Wagoner - April 28, 2021 at 05:10 PM

“ I always loved Rosemary, She was very likeable,

Like Liz said, her zest for life was one of her most positive attributes and something that often gave me the giggles.

She lived every minute of her life in a bright, chirpy and vivacious way.

Always sounding like the Queen with her "oh Darling this and Oh Darling that".

One time I went to stay with Gareth and Barbara in Maryland when I had just finished University.

Rosemary invited me to come and see the work that she was doing on lab rats at John Hopkins University,

As soon as I walked in to her lab, I felt faint and passed out. Rosemary found this so very amusing as Jack (my dad), was a doctor, and I remember her saying to me as I was coming to.. "Oh Darling I would have thought you would have had a much stronger stomach than that given your father was a doctor."

Always playful, always positive, always memorable.

Rosemary was a credit to herself living life to the absolute fullest, I loved hearing about all of her travels well into her senior years with absolute enthusiasm.

She traveled for as long as they would let her on a plane.

Her career has been nothing short of spectacular and I have kept every jacket, pair of booties and lovely knitted garments that she so generously made for my son when he was a baby. They were just divine and the little extras like duckling buttons made them just perfect.

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I hope that Rosemary's legacy lives on in all of us in the way that she embraced life and all of its offerings - this is something I will never forget.

So, "oh darling" we loved you and you made our world that much brighter through your enthusiasm and joie de vivre.

Love love love....wherever you may be. xoxox

Rhiannon - April 27, 2021 at 10:17 PM

ES

“ I am and always have been proud to tell people about my grandmother Rosemary, and while I knew that the day would come when I would have to do so in the past tense, the shock and sadness of her passing are greater than I might have expected; her vitality and drive in the face of life's many obstacles made it seem as if she would outlive us all. And while I also knew that opportunities to develop our relationship would not last forever, the sense that she would always be somewhere in the world – sailing or teaching or touring foreign climes or knitting or speeding along a 10-lane beltway after a full French press of strong coffee – also made it seem there was always time. Now there is not, and I will miss her spirited and incisive conversation, ready humour and the times I wish I had been able to spend with her very much. But, while most people are settling into retirement and tending to their grandchildren, Rosemary was doing all of the above and more, and the inspiration of her example is to me every bit as valuable as other qualities a grandmother might offer to her grandchildren. And when she did only recently slow into a kind of retirement, she took great pleasure in keeping herself busy knitting and sewing beautiful clothes for mine and my brother's children – an offering of love that was truly felt by us and by them.

I feel grateful and awed to have had Rosemary as my grandmother and can only hope to emulate in however small a way her indefatigable commitment to living.

Thank you Granny Rees, and goodbye.

Elizabeth Seymour - April 27, 2021 at 05:14 PM

DR

“ We were fortunate to meet Rosemary when first moving to Venice, FL. Her bright smile, easy conversation, and humor will always be remembered. Although Rosemary had many accomplishments and successes in her life, we think one of her greatest was her relationship with her son Gareth. Rosemarie will be missed and we are grateful to have known such a dynamic woman.
Debby and Rustom Rastinehad

Deborah and Rustom Rastinehad - April 26, 2021 at 10:08 AM

PS

“ Rosemary was the epitome of a lady, but so much more. She was like a favorite cousin who was ready and willing to do anything and go anywhere with you. She had a wry sense of humor and in conversations would come in with a pithy comment that would cut to the chase and leave you laughing. Her guilty pleasure was going thrift shopping. I have been truly fortunate to have had her in my life. Hugs to all of her family. Pinky

Pinky Stewart - April 26, 2021 at 06:08 AM

MS

Dear Pinky, I'm so glad you mentioned the thrift shopping. She just loved it and so do I! And as for the pithy comments, many of them live on with family and friends still using them and laughing together. Thanks for your reflections. Melanie

Melanie Seymour - April 26, 2021 at 11:20 AM

SW

“ We had the pleasure of meeting Rosemary in the late 1980’s while living next door to Gareth and Barb in Maryland. We will always remember her interesting stories, positive attitude, wit, drive to stay active and relevant, dedication to her students and teaching career, and her kindness to us. Rosemary was one of Alan’s first clients when he started his own home improvement business back in the early 90’s, and she graciously took the time to write a lovely recommendation letter which helped to secure additional business for many years. When we last visited Rosemary a couple of years ago in Venice, I was amazed at how talented she was with her many crafts - making costumes for the theater and teaching herself to paint creating some beautiful artwork. Rest In Peace Rosemary - you set a great example for how to live life to the fullest!

Sharon and Alan Wakefield - April 25, 2021 at 07:09 PM

 Diana
Gilman

“ Rosemary was a true everyday heroine, she was graceful, witty, kind and inspirational. We met at the Venice Theater costume shop, she was very easy to get along, and always gave her all to help others. I told her many times "I want to grow up just like you". I admire her optimism and quiet strength, I am grateful to have met her and will keep her memories with me forever.

Diana Gilman

Diana Gilman - April 25, 2021 at 06:30 PM

GR

“ *When my mother and I relocated from Sydney, Australia to St. Louis, Missouri some 50 years ago so she could pursue her PHD in Anatomy we had many lean years. She lived a modest lifestyle but still managed to travel extensively.*

Our modest lifestyle made me learn the value of money and her drive to achieve transferred to me. She was able to make the best of any situation and never complained. She utilized her time and was always active and productive right up to her last day. I will always remember her love for strong black coffee which she made in her French press daily.

In her final years in Venice, Florida we spent much time together and I am very grateful for that time. I will miss her terribly but will meet again.

All my love, Gareth Rees

Gareth Rees - April 25, 2021 at 01:20 PM

RW

“ Dearest Rosemary

I first met you when I was able to be reunited with Melanie, your daughter and my much loved childhood friend from days of yore We met at your flat in Washington in 2004 and from then onwards the three of us had the most wonderful times together in the UK, France and on several cruises around the Mediterranean.

Your sense of humour matched Melanie's and mine and so how we laughed at the ridiculous jokes and stories we told one another. You were able to reacquaint your earlier life in London by staying with us in our flat in Chiswick but you were particularly fond of our country cottage in the Cotswolds. I am so honoured that you have asked for some of your ashes to be buried in our garden overlooking the delightful view of the hills you so enjoyed.

You were keen to stay in our flat in in Sete (France) where we were all able to enjoy meals on the balcony overlooking the sea; and then at St Gervais Les Bains in the Alps; and after these flats were sold you came to stay several times with us in the villa at St Siffret (France). However, it was the cruises that were the holidays full of adventure where we visited places that you had never previously seen in your worldwide travels during your life.

I shall miss you enormously during my visits to Florida to see you, Gareth and Barbara but thank the Fates that I was able to be part of your life for so many years.

Rupert Wiles

Rupert Antony Wiles - April 25, 2021 at 11:52 AM

NB

“*Rosemary was an extraordinary woman, and I feel blessed that I knew her and shared many wonderful conversations with her over the last few years. When she lived at Venice Ave, Condos she enjoyed attending our Friday social hours, and we would chat about travel, medicine, children, and Venice Theater. Singapore and England were often topics as I had spent time in both these countries where she had resided. Her stories of life in different countries were fascinating, The love and pride she had for Melanie and Gareth was always discussed as well as her knitting for her grandchildren. She was always active, strong in her beliefs, positive, polite, and a true lady. Saw her at Elmcroft when we had dinner together with friends. Our last conversation here when Gareth brought her to the St. Patrick’s Day Brunch centered around memories and how wonderful Gareth has been in taking care of her. Was beautiful to read both Gareth’s and Melanie’s thoughts of their mother. I now have the privilege to live in the condo Rosemary and Gareth own and where she lived prior to Elmcroft. I will treasure the memories of her here and her remarkable life and continue to enjoy the friendship of Gareth and his wife.*

*With love to a most inspirational lady,
Nancy Bowman*

Nancy Bowman - April 25, 2021 at 11:06 AM

MS

“ It is my great good fortune to be the daughter of Rosemary Rees. I was born in London just after her 22nd birthday at the Royal Free Hospital for women in London, where she was a medical student. My arrival while very welcome was not well-timed as it meant an end to her hard won place as a female medical student in post-war Britain. She was always very bright and hard-working, but a baby and then my father's qualification as a doctor along with our departure in 1952 from the UK to the Far East, put an end to her studies and professional ambitions for a decade. During those years she welcomed the arrival of my brother Gareth and enjoyed life in Ipoh and Singapore. The family's move to Sydney, Australia in 1962 allowed her to resume her studies and she never looked back, doing well at each stage of university, culminating in a PhD in Anatomy, awarded by Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. By all accounts she was a wonderful teacher of Anatomy in many different countries and over many decades.

For the family, she was a dedicated, sister, aunt, mother, grandmother and great grandmother. One of her great interests was travel, particularly to places where the local culture was still relatively original and untouched by western modernisation. She was fit and active, enjoying sailing, tennis and skiing well into her 70s. She also enjoyed gardening and later developed an enthusiasm for indoor house plants such as African violets and orchids. She had a truly magnificent stand of orchids in her unit at Elmcroft, all lovingly propagated and tended by her

Another very productive interest and ability were her skills with textiles, both sewing and knitting. My little dresses were all made with beautifully smocked bodices in the fashion of the 1950s. Then as grandchildren and great grandchildren arrived, more garments emerged from her hands especially since her retirement from teaching. In this last year the supply has been constant as she kept herself busy during the pandemic lockdown. She was taught to knit by her nanny during the war making socks for the troops and taught herself to sew. She loved the volunteering work she did with the

Venice Theatre Costume Shop and the companionship of others who worked there and made her so welcome.

Rosemary was a woman of many qualities, great intelligence, vitality and ability. She was independent, free-spirited and hard-working; altogether a hard act to follow but a great inspiration to her family and professional colleagues.

I loved her deeply and will miss her terribly but have memories enough to last forever.

*Vale Rosemary, my dear and remarkable mother.
With all my love, Melanie Seymour*

Melanie Seymour - April 25, 2021 at 09:16 AM

SB

“*Rosemary was my aunt, my mother's younger sister. She and Angela were close as children but their lives went in separate directions with Rosemary embarking on her career in medical science which led to the impressive international portfolio (summarised in the obituary) and having her own family, Melanie and Gareth, outside the UK. Though I heard much about her I didn't meet in person until I was 18 when she visited us in 1980. As Angela always described her, she was bright, charming, interested and charismatic. I remember spending a lovely day with her in Washington DC in 1992, when I was making my first visit to the USA presenting some research at a conference of the American Urological Association. We had lunch together and pottered around the monuments and Smithsonian. A colleague who I see occasionally nowadays tagged along with us that day and still asks me how Aunt Rosemary is when I see him - I shall have to break the sad news to him! Rosemary had a great life and is now resting in peace. God bless her and her family.*

Simon Brewster - April 25, 2021 at 04:26 AM

BC

“ My strongest memory is the first day I met Rosemary. Gordon brought her to the flat I was staying at in Lavender Bay. She was sitting to the left of me and said I'd find it difficult to complete my degree studying part time and working. She suggested I move in with her and her family. I said yes and my life was changed forever. I will always remember her kindness. Thank you Rosemary.

Barbara Crawford - April 24, 2021 at 08:48 PM

DL

“ What an amazing and interesting woman. I could listen to Rosemary all day!
Extremely accomplished yet humble. A wonderful spirit and attitude. A real inspiration.
I am so glad our paths crossed on this life journey. How fortunate is Gareth and how fortunate was Rosemary. God bless.

Debbie Linders - April 24, 2021 at 02:41 PM

LD

“ Rosemary was a very special lady! I always looked forward hearing her lovely voice while we were working away at the Venice Theatre Costume Shop. I don't think there was anything she couldn't or wouldn't do to help out. When I heard she had moved to Bella Vita, I immediately introduced her to my Mom who has lived there since 2013. Mom already had two other English friends and Rosemary was a natural fit. They became fast friends and "table mates" until Covid-19 upended their routine. My Mom, her other "table mates" and I will certainly miss her. Rosemary was a bright light and the world is a little dimmer without her.
With our sincere condolences,
Iva Scott and Linda Davis



Linda Davis - April 24, 2021 at 09:30 AM

JL

“ *She was a true Renaissance woman. Her accomplishments were amazing for women even in present time. Her legacy will live on through the wonderful son she raised.*

Joan Lino - April 24, 2021 at 09:30 AM