

Katharine Vasant Thompson

Portland Press Herald

Friday, January 14, 2005

Katharine Vasant Thompson passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, Jan. 9, 2005 after a valiant battle against breast cancer. Known lovingly to all as Katie, she died surrounded by her family with the support of countless others whose lives were touched by her friendship.



Katie was born on Aug. 7, 1942, to John and Marion Vasant, who resided in Huntingdon Valley, Pa. Throughout her childhood, Katie enjoyed sailing with her family on Long Island Sound and became a skilled and passionate sailor. Her life-long love of sailing took her from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the Mediterranean to the Caribbean.

Her education at Abington Friends School taught Katie to uphold the values of peace and world outreach espoused by the Quakers. In 1958, she was selected to represent her school as an exchange student in Selestat, France. She went on to graduate in 1964 from Wheaton College in Norton, Mass., earning a Bachelor's Degree in French.

In 1965, Katie married Ranald Hobbs. They lived together in Washington, D.C. and later in Baltimore with their two children, Karen and Christopher. After separating from Ranald, Katie

eventually relocated to Wiscasset, as a single mother. She worked at the law office of David Soule and enhanced her creative side with macramé artistry and craft projects, thereby establishing herself in the arts and crafts community.

Katie was introduced to William M. Thompson, an architect practicing in Princeton, N.J., who joined her in Maine when they married in 1974. They lived together in Wiscasset prior to moving to Sheepscoot, where they have lived for the past 18 years with their two daughters, Cammie and Gillian.

In 1981, Katie spent a year with her family in Scotland, where she became inspired by innovative approaches to education. Her convictions about early childhood education and her amazing love of children culminated in the founding of the Sheepscot Valley Children's House, an alternative pre-school in Wiscasset, where she acted as director until 1992. Her boundless enthusiasm and creativity are still apparent in the spirit that remains the cornerstone of the school today.

Leaving her position as director of the school enabled Katie to focus her energies elsewhere. She was dynamically involved in her community, serving as a member of various organizations, including Lincoln County Historical Association, the Female Charitable Society, the Wiscasset Planning Board, and the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association.

Katie was also a devoted and active member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, where she assisted as Reader, Chalice Bearer, and Lay Eucharistic Minister. She helped initiate the hand bell choir, and participated in the recent Christmas Eve bell-ringing performance.

Katie's radiant smile was contagious, and her caring manner nurtured many friendships over the years. By all who knew her, Katie will be remembered for her creative generosity, her adventurous spirit, and her passion for life. She lived a full life and lived it abundantly.

Katie was predeceased by her father, John S. Vansant, and an infant son, William Thompson. She is survived by William M. Thompson, her husband of 29 years; a son, Christopher Hobbs "Chris" of Bradenton, Fla.; three daughters, Karen F. Paul of Atlanta, Ga., Katharine M. Thompson "Gillian" of Golden, Col., and Joanna C. Thompson "Cammie" of Boston, Mass.; her mother, Marion Fisher Vansant of Damariscotta; and a sister, Susan Vansant Bartz of Santa Barbara, Calif.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 15, at 11 a.m., at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Newcastle.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Katie's name may be made to:

*Sheepscot Valley Children's House
c/o Ethel Stansfield
P.O. Box 449
Wiscasset, Maine 04578*

Or

*Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association
624 Sheepscot Road
Newcastle, Maine 04553*