

OBITUARIES

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Sheila Joyce (Roach) Varner - 78, Salmon River, Colchester County, passed away peacefully, surrounded by love, on Sunday evening, December 21, 2025 at Shannex Debert Court, Debert, where she had resided since March 2024. Born in Pictou, she was a daughter of the late Patrick "Pat" and Winnifred "Winnie" (Conrad) Roach. From humble beginnings, Mom knew what hard



Sheila Joyce (Roach) Varner

work was, and started working at a young age. She told stories of hanging wash out in the winter, bringing it in frozen stiff, and then hanging it by the wood stove. She worked at Johnson's Motel in Pictou for many years and cleaned there, as well as with Northumberland Ferries where she cleaned as well. Mom and Dad met while he was apprenticing at McLaren Funeral Home in Pictou. Following his apprenticeship, they moved to New Germany, where they were married in 1976, and in 1979, they moved to Truro. Mom cared for numerous children in our home on Douglas Street, and she enjoyed walking around and exploring the town, getting to know people and places. She enjoyed cooking and baking, and in the 80s she was featured on the front page of Truro Daily News showcasing how to make "Sheep Noses"! (They are delicious!) Mom absolutely loved to read, and would soak in every word on each page. She could hold a conversation about any topic, and loved how reading would take her to so many different places. Always a terrific speller, she loved to play Scrabble, and played her last game, which she probably won, in early October; she knew words that would boggle your mind! Until 2020, she was an avid bowler on weekly leagues. Sheila and Ed enjoyed trips to Cuba, Dominican Republic, and other warm places. They took an interest in camping, having a seasonal site at WOW Campground, and for the past number of years at Shenanigans Campground, where they made many new friends. Although never one for crafts and handiwork, she didn't like to be idle; she worked in private home care, retail at M&M Meats, Jean's Flowers and Gifts and Suckling and Chase Florists where she made many dear friendships with clients and friends. In 2004, Sheila and Ed purchased Mattatall Funeral Home, and she worked there as a receptionist and in many more roles until signs of memory loss and dementia started showing in 2023. It absolutely broke her heart to not be able to work anymore as she truly loved her job and interacting with all the people. Sheila was always concerned with everyone else before herself, right up until the time of her death. That was just her way, and there was no changing it! She was also very determined, patient and strong willed, true to her Roach heritage. Sheila was a member of Brunswick Street United Church, where she enjoyed singing in the choir and also worked on various committees. She absolutely loved music, listening and singing whenever she got the chance. Even when she wasn't feeling her best, she could hit those high notes. Berthold Auerbach is quoted as saying, "Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." Truer words could not be spoken, as music does help us in difficult times. Sheila is survived by her husband of 49 years, Ed; children, Robert "Bobby" Varner, Brenda Turple, Bruce Varner; siblings, Jerry (Valerie) Roach, Pictou; Donnie Roach, Central West River; Jane Delaney, Pictou; in-laws, Helene (John) Parnell, New Germany; Cheryl Varner, New Germany; Michelle MacDonald (Clark), Timberlea; granddaughter, Noa Grover; great grandchildren, Tommy Grover and Julia Grover; several nieces and nephews. Along with her parents, she was predeceased by her parents-in-law, Ray and Gerelene (Woodworth) Varner; brothers-in-law, Douglas "Doug" Delaney, Richard Varner; nephew, Michael Varner. We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to the incredible staff at Shannex Debert Court for your care, comfort and love. You made Sheila feel so welcome and took such good care of her. It was a huge comfort to all of the family knowing that she was in such a home-like atmosphere. To our family and friends, we would like to thank you for your tremendous support during this journey. We would also like to thank Dr. Bruce Phillips, Heather and Karen for their years of care and friendship. In times like these, hard decisions have to be made, and it makes it a bit easier knowing that others support and understand. Arrangements have been entrusted to Mattatall - Varner Funeral Home, 55 Young Street, Truro, where Sheila's family received friends from 3-6 p.m., Monday, December 29, 2025. Funeral service was held 1 p.m., Tuesday, December 30, 2025 at Brunswick Street United Church, 250 Brunswick Street, Truro, Reverend April Hart officiated. Livestream of Sheila's service is available via the link on her obituary on the funeral home website. Spring interment in Bible Hill Cemetery, 41 Warren Drive, Bible Hill. If so desired, donations in Sheila's memory to CARMA Colchester (Pet Rescue) or Bible Hill Cemetery are welcomed. Tributes, words of comfort and memories may be shared at: www.mattatallvarnerfh.com



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O'BRIEN, Isabel Ethel - We are saddened to announce the passing of Isabel Ethel O'Brien on December 12, 2025, at her home in East Mountain at the age of 102. Born in Bona Vista, Newfoundland on June 5, 1923, she was the daughter of the late Tom and Jessie (Watters) Moulard. Her father passed away when she was two years old as a result of injuries he sustained in WWI. Ethel and her mother lived in Glace Bay briefly but settled in Nictaux Falls after her mother's remarriage to Dr. Phillip Hermann when she was four years old. Ethel was employed by MTT as a telephone operator and supervisor working in Bridgetown, Kentville, Middleton, and Truro throughout her career. She married George O'Brien in 1960, and they celebrated their fiftieth anniversary shortly before his passing in 2010. They enjoyed taking trips together and keeping active during their retirement. Ethel was an avid reader from an early age. Her hobbies in her earlier years also included working in her flower gardens, doing crosswords and jigsaw puzzles. She always enjoyed having guests drop in to what became affectionately known as "Ethel's Tea Room." She was an enthusiastic fan of the Toronto Blue Jays. She lived in her home by herself until she was 100 years old. She is survived by stepdaughter, Marion Taylor; stepdaughter-in-law, Susan O'Brien, sister-in-law, Phyllis Hermann; niece, Jill Murray and their extended families. Besides her parents and husband, she was predeceased by her brother, Arthur (Doc) Hermann and stepson, George O'Brien. Donation in Ethel's memory may be made to a charity of your choice. Arrangements have been entrusted to Colchester Community Funeral Home, 512 Willow St., Truro. A private graveside service will be held at a later date.

STORR, Eleanor Yan - It is with profound sadness that the family of Eleanor Yan Storr (nee Wilson) announces her passing on December 13, 2025, in Colchester East Hants Health Centre's Palliative Care Unit. Born on March 17, 1935, in Summerside, PEI, to Dr. Rev. JB Wilson and Natalie Wilson (nee Cox). She is survived by her children, James Eric Storr (Lori Logue Storr) and Robin Elizabeth Storr Paluch (Mariusz Paluch); her beloved grandchildren, Nancy Alexandra (Gabriel Long), James Colm Logue Storr, and Wilson Edward Paluch, as well as many loved nieces/nephews and cousins. The oldest of three girls, with sisters, Mary Bruce (Fisher) and Heather Jean (Jamieson), Eleanor, Yan, Grandma or Yannie, depending on the circle she was travelling in, grew up with a love of family, music, fashion, travel, and working with young people. After graduating from high school in Truro, she followed her passions, attending Acadia University (Class of '57) and The Normal College in Truro. (Fun fact for the teachers in attendance: her professional number only has four digits!) She was truly invested in working with young people, not only in her teaching career but also in her love for Camp Wegesegum; an interdenominational camp in Chipman, NB, where she served as a director and board member for many years. At one point, she even bought and lived on a sailboat, becoming known as the "Mayor of Dock A" in Spanish Town, Virgin Gorda. Although the BVI was dear to her heart, it was the family cottage at Shortt's Lake where she loved to spend time and surround herself with family and friends. Yannie loved to have parties and celebrations at the cottage with signs, decorations, creative birthday cakes and themed napkins. People knew they would have a non-judgmental, caring audience when they sought her support. As recently as this December, she hosted the annual get-together with her teacher comrades, with their traditional Chinese food, tea, and maybe a little wine. The family would like to thank the hospital staff for the care and compassion shown in her final days. Donations can be made to VON, Red Cross, Canadian Cancer Society, or Colchester East Hants Health Centre Foundation. Cremation has taken place. A celebration of life was held Wednesday, December 17th at 11am in Colchester Community Funeral Home, 512 Willow St., Truro. Reception followed. Interment will be held in the spring.

EDWARDS, James George - Age 88, Greenfield. It is with saddened hearts we announce the passing of James "Jim" George Edwards on December 16, 2025, in the Colchester East Hants Health Centre, Truro. Born in Halifax, he was the son of the late George and Sarah Edwards. Jim is survived by his daughters, Belinda Works and Sharon Edwards; nine grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, and sisters, Dorothy Frizzell and Marie Ozon. Besides his parents, he was predeceased by his son, Kenneth; sisters, Joan Shephard and Shirley Staunewhite and brother, Robert. Jim served with the Royal Canadian Air Force from 1955 to 1978. Much of his career was spent in search and rescue operations, where he was stationed at bases across Canada's North and West, including Namao (Edmonton area) and Seba Beach, Alberta, responding to aircraft emergencies in remote and extreme conditions. He also served overseas, including a posting to Germany with a fighter squadron and Shearwater where he worked as an Aviation Technician. After leaving the Air Force, Jim settled in Truro, where he worked as a heavy-duty mechanic. He spent his later years in Greenfield, enjoying time at the camp, hunting, fishing, dabbling in astronomy and living "off grid." Donations in Jim's memory may be made to the Colchester SPCA. At Jim's request, a private service will be held at a later date. Arrangements have been entrusted to Colchester Community Funeral Home, 512 Willow St., Truro, NS.

MARCHAND, Martha Jane - passed away peacefully on Sunday, December 21, 2025, at the age of 78 years in the QEII Health Sciences Centre, Halifax, surrounded by her family. Martha was born in Louisdale, Cape Breton on June 13, 1947. She was a daughter of the late Bernard Adolph and Mary Evangeline (Boudreau) Sampson. She was a stay-at-home mom to her three boys. Martha was always on the go. She enjoyed camping for several years, playing cards or board games, kitchen parties and spending time with her sisters and if she wasn't out and about you could find her in the kitchen where she enjoyed making bread, rolls, meat pies and sweets. Whenever you needed a helping hand, Martha was there. Martha will be lovingly remembered by her sons, Andrew Jr. (Jackie), Joseph (Lisa), James (Nicole); sisters, Ida, Raylene (Ed), Christine (John) and Bernadette and brother, Herbie; grandchildren, Jordan (Sally), Ryan (Meghan), Cadence and Carter; great grandchildren, Kenlee and Paislee, Jayden and Cash; brother-in-law, Edward (Lorraine) and sister-in-law, Eleanor also her best friend and partner in crime, Polly. She was predeceased by her husband, Andrew Sr; brother, Edward a.k.a. "Crow"; brothers-in-law, Ronnie and Russ a.k.a. "Babs," Leonard a.k.a. "Mickey"; grandson, Keeghan; niece, Michelle and great nephew, Eli. No flowers by request, donations may be made to the Heart and Stoke Foundation or a charity of your choice. Cremation has taken place, with a celebration of life and burial to follow at a later date. Arrangements are under the care of Colchester Community Funeral Home, 512 Willow Street, Truro. On-line condolences may be sent to www.ColchesterCommunity.com

SMITH, Susan Lynn - Age 76, Londonderry. It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Susan Lynn (O'Brien) Smith on December 24, 2025, in Vimy Court, Bible Hill with her loving family at her side. Born in Truro, she was a daughter of the late William "Billy" and Clara (McLean) O'Brien. Susan was a hard worker having worked her entire adult life, beginning at MT&T and Statistics Canada, then returning to business school and beginning her career as a legal secretary. Initially, she worked at Patterson Kitz Law Firm and retired from the Burchell MacDougall Law Firm. She and Arnold married in 1971 and shortly after, Aaron, her one and only son whom she adored, was born. Prior to Susan's battle with dementia, she was a firecracker! Sharp as a tack with a wonderful sense of humour. Susan is survived by her loving husband, Arnold; son, Aaron (Mary); grandchildren, Colton, Clara, Morgan and Madelyn - or as Nanny liked to say, "and then there was Madelyn." She is also survived by her sisters, Lorna (Bernie) Morrison, Thunder Bay, ON, and Hope (Gordon) Davies, Porter's Lake. She was predeceased by bothers, Claude (Shirley) O'Brien, Richard (Lois) O'Brien and sister, Margaret (Dick) Ross. Donations may be made to the Colchester SPCA, as Susan had a great love of all animals. As per Susan's request, there will be no visitation or funeral service. Arrangements have been entrusted to Colchester Community Funeral Home, 512 Willow St., Truro, NS.

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