



Loretta Downing Schneider

March 30, 1928 - January 21, 2026

Loretta (Lorette) Downing Schneider born on March 30, 1928 to Clare (Bill) Downing and Kathleen McGowan Downing on her grandfather's farm in the Bitterroot Valley 40 miles south of Missoula, Montana and passed on January 21, 2026. She was the third child of Clare and Kathleen. She had two older brothers, Miles and Donald, one sister Betty Ann Henderson, and two younger brothers, Wallace and Jerry. Lorette attended a 2 room school in Edna, Montana for the first five years and then was transferred to Victor School that had only two grades in each room! She attended Victor High School for two years. In 1942 the family moved to Concrete, Washington where her father worked on the construction of the Ross Dam. They then moved to Seattle where she worked packaging supplies to be sent to the Army overseas. She then went to work for the phone company.

In 1945 the family moved to Monroe. She worked at a restaurant and then decided to learn some office skills so she went to a business school in Everett. She took a bus to Seattle to work for an insurance firm when she lived at a women's residence, St. Theresa's, run by the Seattle Archdiocese next to St. James Cathedral. She later moved with a friend from the insurance agency when she met her future husband, Lee Schneider. They were married in the Catholic Church in Monroe in 1948.

Together they had five children: Rick (Terry), Jan Rolf (Bob), Gregg (Sheila), Kirk (Jeanine) and Rob (Monica). They were married for 30 years. She was the proud grandmother of 11 and great grandmother to 19. What with all the

moves and activities, she hadn't finished her education. She enrolled at Shoreline Community College then transferred to the University of Washington where she graduated in 1974 receiving her degree in History with a minor in Cultural Anthropology. Upon receiving her degree and a teaching certification in Education, she taught at St. Alphonsus Catholic School from 1974 until 1991 when she retired.

Lorette had been a member of St. Mark's Catholic Church since its inception in 1954 with all five children graduating from St. Mark's and Blanchet High School. Lorette enjoyed playing golf and was a member of the Jackson Park Women's club since 1983. She played golf into her mid 80's. She also assisted in organizing the annual family golf tournament known as the Schneider Classic.

She moved from Shoreline to the Willows Apartments in Bellingham in 2015 where she lived independently until her passing at 97 years old. She was known as the Exercise Queen at the Willows and remained active within the community. She was an amazing woman and mother who was a world traveler, writer, history buff, bridge player, proud of her Irish Heritage and devoted Catholic.

A Memorial Mass will be held in her honor at the Church of the Assumption in Bellingham on July 24, 2026 at 10:30.

Upcoming Events

Catholic Funeral Mass

JUL **24**. 10:30 AM (PT)

Church of the Assumption
2116 Cornwall Ave.
Bellingham, WA 98225