



Paula Herb

October 14, 1931 - October 2, 2025

Paula was born on October 14, 1931 in Bellingham, Washington to Paul Joseph Herb and Letitia June Martin. Her grandfather J.J Herb had started Pacific Coast Paper Mills in Bellingham which was eventually sold to Georgia-Pacific.

Paula later moved to Seattle and attended the Helen Bush School for Girls, later renamed the Bush School, and graduated in 1949. She attended Scripps College and married Kenneth Otten who had recently graduated from Claremont Men's College. Kenneth moved to New York to work for R. H. Macy in their buyer training program, while Paula worked for the Democratic Party in New York for Adlai Stevenson's Presidential Campaign.

Paula later moved with her husband to San Mateo, California where she had three children - Peter, Michael, and Sally Otten. Kenneth and Paula later moved to Seattle, so Kenneth could start a new career working in the insurance industry - first with Johnson and Higgins, and later with Safeco. Paula continued her piano studies, attending then teaching at the Cornish School in Seattle. She later taught private piano lessons for 30 years, first in Edmonds at a studio in Firdale Village, and later out of her home, where she lived for over 50 years. Paula was very active in her community and was involved with the League of Women Voters and also served as the President of the Innis Arden Community Club.

During this time, she and Kenneth divorced and she later married Dick J. Smith, a music teacher in the North Shore School District. They had two children, Patricia and Martin Smith.

Dick and Paula eventually divorced, and she later married Warren G. Wehmeyer. They spent their time traveling and wintering in Maui. Paula was a “late” golfer, starting the sport in her 60’s, but enjoyed spending time with her friends at the Seattle Golf Club or the Maui Country Club.

After Warren passed away, Paula moved to a condo in Point Edwards in Edmonds. Later she moved to the Murano Senior Living in Seattle, where she nicknamed herself “Gorgeous” and was well known to the staff.

Paula is preceded in death by her mother and step father, June and Cornelius Root, and her younger brother Joe Herb, who all died tragically when their small airplane crashed in Puyallup. She is also preceded in death by her three husbands. She is survived by her three children from her first marriage, Peter (Rosie) Otten of Seattle, Michael Otten of Bellevue, and Sally Otten (Tom Neir) of Kirkland. She is also survived by the two children of her second marriage, Patricia Smith-Miller (Bill Miller) and Martin Smith (Lisa Maule) of Seattle. Her grandchildren include Laura, David, Eric, John, and Kelsey Otten; Joseph and Robert Neir; and Aidan Smith.

Paula’s children are grateful to everyone at the Murano for the care and warmth they provided during her twilight years.

At her request, there will be no memorial service. Just a private ceremony for her children.

Please make any remembrances to the charity of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Greenacres Memorial Park

5700 Northwest Drive
Ferndale, WA 98248
(360) 384-3401