



## Mary Ruth (Gant) McGrath

March 9, 1931 - March 11, 2023

Mary Ruth (Gant) McGrath, formerly of Salem, Missouri, died Saturday, March 11, 2023, in St. Louis at age ninety-two with her children by her side.

Born March 9, 1931, in Reynolds, Missouri, she was the youngest daughter of the late Raymond and Sallie Meador Gant. The family moved to St. Louis in 1937 where Mary spent her childhood until her senior year in high school, when the Gants moved to Salem.

Mary met Robert McGrath at Salem High School and they eloped to Kansas City on November 6, 1948, where they were married. They lived there a short time before the demands of Robert's father's dairy farm drew them back to Salem to run the McGrath farm and dairy business. Robert took on full responsibility of the dairy business in 1963 after his father's death.

Mary and Robert raised four children in Salem. Robert died in 1973, and Mary, with her son, Mike, kept the dairy running until 1986 when it was sold after eighty-three years in business.

A passionate lover of reading, Mary joined the Salem Public Library's board of directors, where she served ten years before becoming assistant librarian there. She worked hard to pass a tax levy to ensure the library's continuity. Her love of reading was passed on to her children and her grandchildren.

She retired from the library in 1996 and moved to St. Charles, Missouri, to be near her children and grandchildren.

Mary was an active and dedicated member of the First Baptist Church in Salem. Her devotion to church and love of Jesus were the most important things she passed onto her children. She loved singing in the choir and took pride in doing so.

She was a charter member of the Cosmopolitan Club and helped raise money to build the public park next to the Salem Swimming Pool. She also played bridge twice a month.

Mary loved to bake. Chocolate cake, sour cream coconut cake, and cream cheese brownies were her favorites. She also had a talent and love of gardening and needle point.

Mary is survived by four children: Mike McGrath of Kissimmee, Florida, Sally McGrath and her husband Dave Damron of Nashville, Tennessee, Laura Baum and her husband Rusty of O'Fallon, Missouri, and Patrick McGrath and his wife Suzannah, also of O'Fallon; six grandchildren: John and Cally McGrath of Anna, Illinois, Matt and Molly McGrath of Cumming, Georgia, and Tim and Alyssa McGrath and Phillip McGrath of Anna, Zach Baum of Kansas City, Missouri, and Madeline and Matt Lang of St. Louis; six great-grandchildren: Mariel McGrath of Anna, Campbell and Rowan McGrath of Cumming, Sheldon and Nick McGrath and Emma Lang, all of St. Louis, MO; two nieces and one nephew: Steven Graves of St. Charles, Sharon Leach of Hermann, Missouri., and Susan Conover of Springfield, MO.

In addition to her parents and husband, Mary was preceded in death by her daughter-in-law: Millie McGrath; two sisters: Bea Graves and Wilma

Braddock; and two nieces: Judy Tannen and Linda Benedict.

In lieu of flowers, Memorial Contributions may be sent to the Friends of the Salem Public Library 403 N. Jackson St., Salem, MO 65560.

# Cemetery Details

**Cedar Grove Cemetery**

Salem, MO