



CASADA FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY

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1928 — *Lila* — 2023

Lila J. Patterson

November 15, 1928 — March 12, 2023

Rawlins, WY

Funeral services for long-time Rawlins resident Lila J. Patterson will be held on Friday, March 24, 2023, at Casada Funeral Home in Rawlins at 11 a.m.

Lila passed away on March 12, 2023. She was born in Mills, Wyoming on Nov. 15, 1928, to Manfred and Opal Nordwall. She joined older sisters Valearia and Pearl, and the family would later expand to include brothers Raymond, Joe, Bobby, and another sister Betty.

Lila spent much of her childhood on the island of Aruba, Dutch West Indies, where her father was employed as a pipefitter, then foreman, at Standard Oil Company.

Lila thoroughly enjoyed island life and it was there that she began a lifelong love affair with kites, a fascination she would pass on to her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. As Lila tells the story, she was on the beach watching a Chinese family fly their home-made, large, flowing dragon kites. One of the family members noticed her avid interest and walked over and gave her the kite he had made, and she was hooked on making and flying kites.

Lila and sisters Valearia and Pearl enjoyed the white sand beaches and wind-blown divi-divi trees and spent hours swimming in the ocean with tropical fish.

The Nordwall family was stationed in Aruba for about nine years. Lila was three years old when she made her first voyage to Aruba and 12 when she returned to the U.S.

After World War II broke out, Opal and the children were sent to Maryland for safety in 1940. The family lived in Maryland three years before returning to Wyoming.

Lila graduated from high school in Wheatland in 1945. After graduation she got a job and was employed at the Coffee Cup Café where she met the love of her life, George Patterson. George came into the café and said to Lila, "Whose dream are you?" She fell for the line and for George and the couple was married on July 14, 1946, a marriage that lasted 60 years and eleven months before George preceded her in death.

Lila and George lived in Wheatland for a few months before moving to Rawlins where their first child, George Jr., was born in April of 1947. George Jr. was soon joined by siblings Judy, Bernie, Patrick, Michael, Kevin, twins Terry and Barry and Becky. Two children, Bonnie and Teddy Ralph, preceded Lila and George Sr. in death.

Lila had a great sense of humor, and she shared her adventuresome nature with her children. She loved to garden and after the children left home, she turned her backyard into a veritable garden of Eden with plants and flowers, windmills, rocks, and other yard ornaments that she acquired. But, while the children were growing up it was more of a wilderness, complete with foxholes and marble pits, for the entertainment of her children.

Lila was famous for her crocheting and needlework. Family members were thrilled and honored to receive a blanket, jacket or other needlework piece, hand crocheted or stitched by Lila and personalized to reflect the personality of each recipient.

Lila loved all things Wyoming and would sometimes accompany one or the other of her children on hunting expeditions. She often took the children on fishing outings. She collected rocks, plants, and anything she found interesting while outdoors.

She kept up on fads and current events, becoming quite a Rubik's Cube aficionado and she was a Jeopardy and trivia whiz. She loved the stars and was very happy to get to see the total eclipse of the sun in 2017, traveling with family members to a town where the eclipse could be viewed in totality.

Lila and George returned to Aruba in 1976, a gift from their children for their 30th wedding anniversary and it was a journey Lila loved, despite the changes to her beloved island, which has since become a popular tourist destination.

She also got to experience one of her "bucket list" items by making a trip to see the majestic California Redwood trees in 2012. Lila attended as many graduations, weddings, and funerals as she could get to, as well as other milestone activities and events in the lives of her family.

Lila was "as good a mom and grandma as she knew how to be" and will be greatly missed by the progeny with which she has gifted the world. Progeny which includes her surviving nine children and their spouses; 24 grandchildren, three of whom preceded her in death; 47 great grandchildren and 6 great great grandchildren. She is also survived by her brother Bobby; 2 sisters-in-law, Phyllis and Mary; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

There will be an open casket viewing from 2 to 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 23rd at Casada Funeral Home. Following the funeral service on Friday, there will be a reception at the Depot in Rawlins. Interment will be on Saturday, March 25 at the Wheatland cemetery at 2 p.m.