



## Viola May Guthrie

July 27, 1920 - July 6, 2012

Viola May Guthrie died peacefully in her home on July 6, 2012. Born on July 27, 1920, she was the daughter of the late Matthew Hardin Guthrie and Flora Hawthorn Taft Guthrie. She had one sister, the late Barbara Guthrie McDonald, formerly of Catskill, NY.

Vee, as she was known to her family and friends, was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas and moved to Baldwin, NY with her family by the time she was 2 years of age. While growing up on Long Island, she enjoyed many summers swimming and sailing in the ocean and was always happy to share her fine memories of her youth. She attended Baldwin Public Schools and upon graduation from high school in 1938, she went on to attend Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, where she graduated with a degree in American Literature in 1942. After graduation from college, Vee worked as an Engineering Aide for the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation in Bethpage, NY during WW II. In 1944, Vee joined the WAVES, a branch of the US Naval Reserves which was established by the US Congress to allow women to serve their country stateside during wartime. Vee was commissioned as a lieutenant on June 27, 1944 and served until the time of her honorable discharge on July 14, 1946.

In 1946-1948, Vee pursued her love of drawing and attended the Rhode Island School of Design. Upon completion of her studies, she began a career as a

commercial artist and free-lanced for many authors and publishing houses. Her illustrations for many books can still be found today and are cherished by her family. Vee went on to have her own children's book published titled "Animals from "A to Z" and also illustrated two children's cookbooks written by her sister, Barbara Guthrie McDonald. Vee wrote the Animal Corner for the Register Star and also enjoyed spending time reading to preschoolers for Story Hour at the Hudson Area Library.

Vee received her teaching certificate from the University at Albany and in 1968 she became a 1st grade teacher at Claverack Union Free School. She taught many students of the Hudson City School District until the time of her retirement in 1985. Many of Vee's students will recall that her method of instruction in the classroom focused on kindness and respect to all living things. Vee felt that young children learn best in an environment that is calm and nurturing as well as one full of adventure and interesting learning opportunities. Vee enjoyed taking field trips with her students to the Albert Schweitzer Friendship House in Great Barrington, Massachusetts where they learned about the works of the great humanitarian, Albert Schweitzer and enjoyed a day exploring the beautiful grounds.

Since the time of her retirement, Vee spent many years painting watercolors of local landscapes to include Olana and the Catskill Mountains. She also traveled to locations such as Scotland, the Cook Islands, specifically the island of Rarotonga in the Pacific and New Zealand where her talent and use of colors created lovely works of art, some of which have been displayed in many local art shows.

Vee is survived by her niece Barbara Ellsworth of Hudson, NY, great-nieces, Jackie Murray of Silver Spring, Maryland, Stephanie Keyser of Claverack, NY, and Jennifer Dailey of Riverdale, NY, and a great-nephew, Michael Ellsworth of Manhattan.

In memory of Vee and her wonderful life, contributions may be made to the Columbia Greene Humane Society and the Greene County Council on the Arts.

# Tribute Wall

MO

“ *Michael O'Quin lit a candle in memory of Viola May Guthrie*



---

**Michael O'Quin** - December 14, 2015 at 09:59 PM

CM

“ *I just recently learned of Miss Guthrie's passing and was saddened. Had I looked her up even just six months ago, I could have had the opportunity to tell her what a positive impact she has had in my life. Although she was my first grade teacher 40 years ago, she has always remained my favorite teacher. She encouraged and inspired me to become an illustration major in college... a field I had a career in for many years. She now inspires me yet in another way, as I now am a preschool teacher. She treated each child with respect and importance, and showed us to be kind to others and also to animals. She showed us kindness while she creatively taught us subjects such as phonics and handwriting. She was a special person who left a big impact on me, and will be missed. Cathie-Rose (Ganci) Michaud*

---

**Cathie-Rose Michaud** - December 29, 2012 at 10:52 PM

VB

“ *Vie and I taught school together in Claverack . She was a great inspiration to all . Much talent. My condolence's to all the family as I had Michael as a wonderful student at Charles Wm.'s and worked with his Mom. you are all in my prayers. Viola Vi Bramkamp*

v

c

---

**Viola [Vi] Bramkamp** - July 12, 2012 at 08:02 AM

BO

“ I have only now Vee for almost 7 yearsbut she made a BIG impact on my life!!!We had many a lunch at Dutchman's Landing watching the boat traffic,sail boats, canoes, barges being pushed or pulled up or down the Hudson River by tug boats. Also enjoyed the view of "Olana" from the paring lot and often took a ride up to "OLana" to see the view or enjoy the solidtude of the lake.Vee has a special place in my heart.Thanks for the memories. Rest in peace,Vee.Bev Ostrom July 9,2012

---

**Beverly J. Osstrom** - July 10, 2012 at 07:46 AM

JS

“ Miss Guthrie was my first grade teacher in Claverack School. She was such a kind teacher. And it is true, even though I had Miss Guthrie over 40 years ago I still remember the trip to the Albert Schweitzer Friendship house and ringing the bell. I feel so lucky to have had her as my teacher. What a lovely lady!! Such a gem. My sympathies to the family. Jennifer Connor Shumsky

---

**Jennifer Connor Shumsky** - July 09, 2012 at 02:58 PM

JH

“ Vee was one of the kindest, dearest, most unique individuals it has been my pleasure to have known for over 40 years. I considered her a close friend, always. It was an honor to work side by side with her in first grade as her aide. Every child who had her for their first grade teacher in Claverack School were indeed lucky. I, and many, many others will never forget her. Vee, rest in peace and know you will always have a special place in my heart. Jeanette Hilscher

---

**Jeanette Hilscher** - July 08, 2012 at 11:56 AM

AB

“ Thoughts and prayers to all of you. Miss. Guthrie will always be remembered by most of the people in Claverack as our 1st grade teacher. I still have her book, she gave me in 1st grade. It is on my shelf and I now read it to my 1st graders. Wonderful person she was.

*Allison Cozzolino Barnett*

---

**Allison Cozzolino Barnett** - July 08, 2012 at 09:28 AM

LO

“ I first met Vee when I worked at Claverack School and we became good friends. Although I haven't seen her in several years, I have very often thought of her with love and admiration. She even gave me one of her watercolors, which I cherish to this day! She was a lovely, talented and caring person. She will be sorely missed. Our sympathies to her family. Joe and Lois O'Connell

---

**Lois OConnell** - July 07, 2012 at 08:45 AM