

Mary Bryant

Written by Karen Ventrone

Tuesday, 12 November 2013 14:19

Mary "Bebe" Bryant was born on January 25, 1932 in Southern Pines, NC, daughter of the late Joe Ellis Maples and Mary Alice Patterson Maples Ladner.

She was art director at WECT – TV in the early 60's, long before computer graphics. Bebe completed all artistic functions by hand, from station cards, show set design, backgrounds for all TV commercials and logos. Known by WECT viewers as Bebe the Weather Girl, she also appeared on early TV shows such as The Jim Burns Show, The Ben McDonald Show, and Carolina in the Morning shows. Her creative visions were also displayed in artwork and sets for the Azalea Festival Grand Coronation Ceremonies at Brogden Hall.

Following Bebe's TV achievements, she carried on her love and talent for art in numerous private ventures. She launched The Workshop, an original beach wear and crafts store in Wrightsville Beach. Expanding on the successful concept, she later opened a ski wear and mountain crafts in Blowing Rock and Boone, NC. Some might have remembered her from the old Northwestern Bank and the Boone Golf Club.

Her beautiful oil paintings, water color prints, charcoal drawings and inspirational quotes were in demand at large craft shows in the Eastern Carolina's, such as the annual Myrtle Beach Christmas Craft Show. Her talents and creativity were endless and admired by countless numbers of fans. Bebe appreciated the praise-saying, "My greatest satisfaction is knowing that something I have done is treasured."

Her kind heart, quick wit, and "larger than life" personality made her a cherished friend to anyone she met. She was loved and admired by her large and close-knit family, especially her best friend and husband, Johnnie.

She is survived by husband Johnnie Bryant, Jr. in Wilmington, sons Matt Bryant of Wilmington and Brian and wife Teresa Bryant of Winnabow, NC; daughters Debbie and husband Bill Hartley of Boone, NC and Traci and husband Ben Lewis of Grantham, NC; brother Joe and wife Judy Maples of Wilkesboro, NC, and sister Ross and husband Allan Haedrich of Myrtle Beach, SC. In addition she was a proud "Grand Bebe" to 15 grandchildren, 23 great grandchildren and 10 great-great grandchildren.

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Visitation will be Tuesday, November 12, 2013, 6:00 – 8:00 PM at Andrews Mortuary at 17th and Market in Wilmington, NC. Graveside services will be at 3:00 PM Wednesday, November 13, 2013 at Oleander Memorial Gardens in Wilmington.

Special thanks are extended to all the nurses, doctors and staff at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, Davis Communities Rehab Pavilion, Coastal Rehab at NHRMC, and the New Hanover County EMS attendants.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Bebe's memory to the American Diabetes Association and American Heart Association would be sincerely appreciated.