

MEMORIAL MINUTE
FOR
MARY BETH HARTSON RYAN MCCALLA

Mary Beth Hartson McCalla passed away peacefully May 15, 2020 after celebrating her 98th birthday at Kendal at Oberlin. Mary was born February 4, 1922 in Grinnell, Iowa, the youngest of three children of Louis Hartson and Mary Reed Hartson. The family moved to Oberlin, Ohio when her father joined the faculty of Oberlin College. She graduated from Oberlin College in 1943 and then earned a Certificate in Business from Radcliffe College. During WWII, Mary joined the Club Programs for the American Red Cross, managing the Red Cross Club in Venice, Italy, where she met Robert A. Ryan, a first lieutenant in the 88th Infantry, U.S. Army. They were married in 1946. Mary and Robert had three children, Mary Elizabeth “Liz” Ryan Cole of Thetford, VT, Robert A. “Bob” Ryan of Berwick, ME, and Emily Alice “Mimi” Ryan of Burlington, VT. She is also survived by her stepdaughter Cindy McCalla of Mansfield, OH.

After Robert separated from military service, they settled in Hope Valley, N.Y., where Mary was active as a Girl Scout leader, an avid gardener and knitter, and where she earned a graduate MAT degree in education, leading to a career in teaching. After a divorce, she later married Donald McCalla and moved to his home in Sidney, Ohio. While living in Sidney, Mary helped found a chapter of Planned Parenthood and continued her interest in teaching. Mary was very active in the American Association of University Women including serving as president of her local chapter.

After Donald's death, Mary returned to Oberlin, Ohio, and in 2000 moved to Kendal at Oberlin. During her married years she and her children had been attracted to Quakers and Quakers testimonies and once had attended an FGC Annual Gathering. Mary's continued interest in Quakers led her to become a member of Oberlin Friends Meeting in 2003. She is remembered as being fun loving, very sweet and kind, an active attender at Meetings, and committed to working for the rights of women.