



Peggy O'Neil Teague Wilde Bennett, 92 ½, of Leicester, passed away Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at CarePartners Solace Center.

Peggy was the first child of five born to Allen Redmon “Bud” Teague and Evalee Irene Sprinkle. Her childhood years were spent in Leicester, NC; Wingdale, NY; and Baltimore, MD. While a student Leicester High School, she was a member of the girls’ basketball team. She had an ear for music, literally. She played the accordion, the piano, and the double bass, all by ear.

Peggy Teague became Peggy Wilde when she married Berton Morgan Wilde, Jr. in 1948. Blessed with three sons, Steven, Michael, and Daniel, in 4 ½ years, she waited five more years to welcome her

“favorite daughter” Patricia.

Peggy attended Blanton’s Business School, and one of her earliest vocations was as an apprentice of lapidary creation with Native Gemstone Corp.

After marrying Arthur Bennett in 1961, Peggy followed an entrepreneurial path with the formation of her business “The House of Bennett,” which created handcrafted gemstone jewelry for gift shops located in the eastern seaboard states.

Widowed in 1965, Peggy relinquished the traveling portion of her business to stay close to home for her children. In addition to her lapidary work, she became a part-time US Postal Service clerk at the Leicester post office, a career that spanned 27 years and would have seen her as Postmistress had she not declined the proffered post.

Real Estate by Peggy Bennett came to be in the early 1970s. As a licensed broker, Peggy enjoyed listing and selling mountain properties and residences in the northwestern portion of Buncombe County.

In 1998, Peggy was invited to attend a Buncombe County Commissioners’ meeting about a controversial agenda item. That meeting lit a spark in Peggy and led to her becoming an outspoken advocate for the rights of the people against governmental abuse of power.

She founded and served as Program Director of the nonpartisan activist organization – Citizens for Change – working for a better community through awareness of and participation in the local government. The organization took on hot-button issues such as zoning and land use ordinances, and was instrumental in bringing about the change to district elections of the Buncombe County commissioners. Peggy’s “Letters to the Editor” were frequent; she authored a number of “Guest Columnist” pieces; and her comments and photos were featured in numerous articles in local publications. She traveled to Raleigh on several occasions to bring the voice of the people to their elected representatives, and she worked together with officials from both parties.

During her many other activities and demands on her time, Peggy’s passion was the historical Brick Church in Leicester, where many of her ancestors are interred, going back to her great-great-great-grandparents. In 2022, she resigned her duties as a Trustee after a half-century of service. She donated thousands of hours of her time serving as Secretary/Treasurer, requesting donations,

writing and sending newsletters, organizing and overseeing the annual Homecoming, mowing the church grounds, getting a picnic shelter constructed, and spearheading many projects through the years.

Overall, Peggy was a significant contributor to the life and times of Buncombe County and Western North Carolina.

Peggy's departure leaves a void in the lives of her loved ones: son, Steve Wilde and his wife Margarita; daughter, Pat Cothran and her fiancé David Sand; brother, Bill Teague and his wife Carolyn; sister, Gale Champion and her husband Ron; grandsons, Rory Wilde and Shane Wilde; great-grandchildren, Cory and Tori Madison Wilde, and Isabella, Damian, Hannah, and Tallen Wilde; many nieces and nephews whom she loved dearly; first cousins, Kerlee Littrell and Jackie Teague and his wife Mary Gale; and her precious canine companion, Brody.

The family members who preceded Peggy include her parents, her sisters Pat Elliott and Marcella Morgan, her sons Michael Douglas "Mickey" Wilde and Daniel Redmon "Dan" Wilde, and her son-in-law George Cothran.

The family will receive friends from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday, June 15, in the chapel of Groce Funeral Home on Patton Avenue in Asheville. Funeral services will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 16 also in the funeral home chapel. The family welcomes you to share a comment or memory of Peggy during the service. Interment will follow at the Brick Church Cemetery in Leicester.

Condolences to the family may be sent to P.O. Box 53, Leicester, NC 28748. For those wishing to make a memorial in lieu of flowers, you are invited to consider a donation to Brick Church Fund, P.O. Box 1626, Leicester NC 28748.

The online register is available at grocefuneralhome.com.