



Heike Petersen Plath

June 3, 1941 - October 17, 2024

Heike Plath (née Petersen), 3 June 1941 – 17 October 2024

Heike Petersen Plath was born June 3, 1941 in Hamburg, Germany, to Helga Emma Petersen and Ralf Oskar Petersen. She passed away from cancer on October 17, 2024 at her home in Pawleys Island, South Carolina.

Heike was the first of 3 children, followed by Ralf Jorn and Anke Emma. While her childhood backdrop was Germany during World War II, she recounted many joyful memories of working in the family garden, playing piano, and learning to cook. In the 1950s, she attended the Meadi School in Cairo, Egypt, where she cultivated the seeds of lifelong passions: piano, sports, Middle Eastern cuisine, and travel. A national champion swimmer, she won the 50-meter freestyle at the age of 12. While in Egypt, she visited treasured sites such as the great Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx; she also witnessed her father create fields of strawberries along the Nile River, earning him the nickname “the Rainmaker.”

In Cairo, Heike met Claus Plath, a German expat who worked in the shipping industry. When Heike’s parents immigrated to Ontario, Canada, Heike and Claus followed and were married on July 7, 1962. Shortly thereafter, the newlyweds immigrated to the United States and settled in Washington, D.C. Daughter Karen Joan was born on August 13, 1964, followed by Christine Cornelia on January 23, 1969. In 1978, the family moved to Baltimore, Maryland, and Heike started a successful career in real estate. She also honed her tennis and leadership skills as a three-time president of the Green

Spring Racquet Club. Heike filled 20 years in Baltimore with dinner parties and crab feasts, family trips to Florida and Canada, and visits with friends from all over the U.S. and around the world.

When Heike and Claus retired in 1999, they moved to their “happy place”: Pawleys Island, South Carolina. Heike continued to play tennis at the Litchfield Racquet Club, and they traveled extensively to Belgium, Greece, Italy, Austria, Spain, and Germany. In 2011, Heike lost her beloved Claus and, after 50 years, had to create a new chapter. With her signature fortitude, she continued her joys of spending time with family and friends, travel, and playing bridge and piano. She joyfully attended granddaughters’ Mackenzie and Emma’s soccer games and swim meets, fully (and vocally!) embracing their athleticism and sportsmanship from the stands. Heike became a docent at Brookgreen Gardens, greatly expanding her circle of friends and experiences. Her already close relationship with sister Anke became even closer as they traveled the world together. Heike’s dear childhood friend Wolf-Dieter Eberwein also joined her travels and played piano-cello duets with her in Pawleys Island.

Heike’s pride and joy was her family. She leaves as her and Claus’ legacy daughter Karen Plath, daughter Christine Lawson, and grandchildren (and travel buddies) Mackenzie Elizabeth Lawson and Emma Claire Lawson. Her remarkable family around the world includes sisters-in-law Darla Petersen, Brigitte Plath, and Annette Plath-Gabler; brother-in-law Kambyse Samii; nieces Nathalie Samii Hanotier, Delara Petruszka Vel Peterseil, Caroline Samii, and Barbara Plath; and nephews Kevin Petersen, Steven Petersen, Arne Plath, and Christoph Plath. Her “first friends” in the United States, Gesa McHenry and Gloria Fenton, are like sisters to Heike and an enormous source of love and support. A special thank you to Alicia Barnes for many kindnesses for which we are eternally grateful.

Preceding Heike in death were her father, mother, brother, husband, and sister.

A celebration for Heike will take place Sunday, December 15, 2024, from 3:00

– 5:00 p.m., at the Holliday Cottage in Brookgreen Gardens, 1931 Brookgreen Drive, Murrells Inlet, South Carolina. This celebration will take place during the Nights of a Thousand Candles, one of Heike's favorite events and a befitting backdrop by which to remember her.

We would like to be able to honor Heike with a gift at Brookgreen Gardens, a place she loved so much. If you would like to contribute and honor Heike, you can: Make an online gift with a credit card: <https://www.brookgreen.org/memorial-and-tribute-gifts> (just be sure to put Heike's name in the box).

Goldfinch Funeral Home, Beach Chapel is assisting the family.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

DEC **15**. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Brookgreen Gardens
1931 Brookgreen Dr.
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576

Tribute Wall

GF

“ Gloria Fenton and the Bucci Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Heike Petersen Plath.

Gloria Fenton and the Bucci Family - October 23, 2024 at 09:05 AM

GF

“ Gloria Fenton and the Bucci Family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Heike Petersen Plath.



Gloria Fenton and the Bucci Family - October 23, 2024 at 09:05 AM