



Member Tribute

Maureen Avery

Maureen Avery, long time member and friend to many Commander Club members passed away in her home in Del Ray Beach, Florida on Oct. 16th, 2015. As many long time members are aware, Maureen was the "better half" to Chris-Craft designer Dick Avery. The Avery's joined the club shortly after its inception.

They began to attend club rendezvous' where they made many long time friends. Many is the member who remembers Maureen's radiant smile, which was on prominent display as the Avery's attended seven club rendezvous'. Their first rendezvous was in Portsmouth in 2002, followed by South Haven, Bradenton, Michigan City, Dubuque, Algonac, and finally Del Ray Beach in 2008. Health issues curtailed their long distance travel, but through Maureen's prowess on the computer they remained interested in subsequent club activities in following years.

Maureen's slightly edited obituary below fills in much on her early years, but there are some precious tidbits not there. As husband Dick followed his career of designing our Commanders, Chris-Craft utilized Maureen in some of the Commander brochures and advertising. For the 55 Commander, Maureen is shown on the port gunnel wearing a black & white dress. Rumor h-as it she had some drapes at their home she did not particularly care for, so she made a dress out of them, which is the dress she is wearing in that brochure picture.

Then, when Dick finished the design of the 580 Tournament Fisherman and it was built, Chris-Craft once again had Maureen pose for the brochure picture. This time the boat is on full plane and Maureen is in the aft deck fighting chair with Dick standing (hanging on for dear life?) beside her. Another interesting picture of Maureen shows her on a small plywood hydroplane called "Go Boat" Dick designed and built at their home in Dearborn, Michigan before they moved to Florida late in Dick's career.

Following is a slightly edited obituary on Maureen:

"Maureen Elizabeth Sheila Ryan Avery, beloved wife, mother, mother-in-law, sister and grandmother passed away peacefully in her home in the early evening of October 16, 2015, after a long period of physical challenges. She is survived by her husband of nearly sixty years, Richard D. Avery, son Scott R. Avery, daughter-in-law



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Rosemary Avery, grandchildren Julia and Grace Avery, and sisters Patricia Hallagan and Mary Maxine (Bobbie) Haise.

Maureen was born March 23, 1937 in Chicago, Illinois. Her early talents for singing and theatre blossomed during her subsequent school years in Mankato, Minnesota and Louisville, Kentucky. It was at one of her performances for the USO where she met Richard Avery, and they married the following year (December 31, 1955). Richard's career as an industrial designer took them to Detroit, Michigan (where son Scott was born July 26, 1960) and southern Florida, where she spent the rest of her life, excepting a few detours to Austin, Texas and Florence, South Carolina.

She had a sporadic career in real estate, and was a member of many civic and social organizations, as well as St. Mark's Episcopal of Oakland Park, First Presbyterian Church of Lighthouse Point, and, lastly, First United Methodist Church of Boca Raton. She will be remembered for her deep abiding Christian faith, her intellect, her gift of giving great counsel, and her radiant smile. She lives in our hearts forever. Her memorial service will be at 2pm Sunday Nov.8 at the First United Methodist Church of Boca Raton."

From son Scott Avery's Facebook page:

The memorial service for Maureen Avery will be Sunday November 8 at 2pm at The First United Methodist Church of Boca Raton, 625 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton, Florida. Our aim is a celebration of her life with music, prayer and even a couple of laughs. An informal reception will be held in the Music Suite a few steps away immediately thereafter. Thanks to all for the condolences and loving comments, they really do mean a lot to us, every one.

The Commander Club and Maureen's many, many friends have lost a wonderful lady, but her memory lives on in our hearts and minds. The following by Henry Jackson Van Dyke (1852-1933) sums it up nicely:

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails in the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength and I stand and watch until at last she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come down to mingle with each other. Then someone at my side says, there she goes!" Gone Where? Gone from my sight... that is all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her. And just at the moment when someone at my side says, "There she goes!" there are other eyes watching her coming and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "There she comes!"