



Daniela Brabner-Smith

July 31, 1926 - January 11, 2012

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Gabriele Nina Marie Daniela was the third of four children born to Carl Friedrich and Bertha Siemens on July 31st, 1926 in Berlin, Germany. She came of age during World War Two and, upon completing her high school education, she managed to avoid the required work detail formed by the Nazi government to aid the war effort by enrolling in dramatic school. She was eventually forced into a work unit in Berlin that was shipped east to help with chores on German farms. Less than two months later, she joined the mass of German refugees fleeing west ahead of the advancing Red Army. She returned to her home in Berlin and weathered the Soviet arrival, often hidden away in closets.

After the allies partitioned Berlin, her Dahlem home found itself in the American sector and was requisitioned by the American Army to house military brass sent to help set up a new German government and implement the Marshall plan. Her family became well known by many of the officers stationed in Berlin. In order to qualify for food rations, Daniela worked as a maid in houses occupied by Americans, often serving at dinner parties and other social gatherings.

She met her future husband, Col. John Brabner-Smith, on one such occasion. The couple married in the fall of 1948 during the Berlin Airlift and, soon thereafter, set sail for the country that would become Daniela's new home. John and Daniela settled in the Washington DC area, where Daniela gave

birth to two daughters. Not wishing to raise their children in the city, the couple bought Catocin Mill Farm in Loudoun County, Virginia, where they lived for almost 40 years. Because John worked in Washington, the challenges of country life often fell upon Daniela. Isolation, loose cows or sheep, a dry well, loss of power, snow storms that made trips to town impossible were routine events..

Once her children were in school, Daniela became active in Great Books. Her friends were amazed at her knowledge of the classics. Daniela appreciated her adopted country where debate and differences of opinion were not only tolerated, but encouraged.

She was one of the original founders of the Loudoun County Chapter of the Republican Party. Armed with Robert's Rules of Order, she served as the party's first secretary.

Daniela was also able to cultivate her acting skills — skills she had used briefly in early 1948 in a theater in Wuppertal, Germany. She was the star attraction in numerous plays staged by the Waterford Players.

In January of 1966, Daniela had a conversion experience that changed the focus of her life. She fell in love with Jesus and began a life of love and service to her new Lord and Savior. She joined Bible studies and became an active participant in Lay Witness Missions and Faith Alive, traveling to churches all across America to share the story of how Jesus had changed her life. She was president of the first Women's Aglow Ministry in Loudoun County and went on numerous mission trips, first to South America, later to Haiti and more recently to India and Russia.

Daniela's support and encouragement of her husband's legal endeavors embraced and fostered the Christian Ethic and moral code in the practice of legal studies and the law. Numerous Christian organizations benefitted and were able to expand their reach through Daniela's commitment. The International School of Law, now George Mason University School of Law, founded by her husband, was a vision they shared to offer Christian education in the legal arena. The results of these endeavors changed the lives of many

now active in legal fields around the world.

Daniela gave generously to causes she believed in, missionaries around the globe and to numerous others who came to her for help. She will be remembered for her passionate and loyal spirit, her courage to speak the truth, and her selfless generosity.

She is survived by her beloved sister Annabel von Johnston in Bad Lauchstaedt Germany, her two daughters Anne Alcyone of Westport, Connecticut and Libussa Huge of Summerville, South Carolina, her seven grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren. Her great joy was family — her immediate family in America and her large extended family in Germany.

Upon moving to Summerville, Daniela became an active member of St. Paul's Church. Her memorial service will be held Sunday, January 15th at 4:00 pm in the old church located at 316 West Carolina Avenue, Summerville, SC 29483. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to St. Paul's or to the Salvation Army. ARRANGEMENTS BY JAMES A. DYAL FUNERAL HOME, 303 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUMMERVILLE, SC 29483

Tribute Wall



“ *Daniela Brabner-Smith*

September 29, 2022 at 10:11 AM