

Elizabeth Bamberger



A life well lived

Elizabeth Russell was born in Coulsdon, South of London, in May 1942 and she passed away in our apartment at the Murano Senior Living in Seattle in September 2026. She passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, and she was able to enjoy the final stage of her journey without pain, and with time to reflect on her long and adventurous life with travel, a happy marriage and the joy of helping raise two sons and four grandsons. She had no regrets about things she would have liked to have done, or places she would have liked to visit.

After marrying Mike in 1964 they spent a year working in London before moving to Latin America, where they spent 13 years in Venezuela and El Salvador. In 1978 they moved to the US where they lived in DC and Oregon before finally moving to Murano Senior Living in Seattle in 2024.

Her travels with Mike took her to more than 50 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. She worked in programs for the urban poor in Venezuela and El Salvador before qualifying as a professional interpreter. On moving to the US she completed her Masters and Doctorate in Sociology at the University of Maryland, and worked with several social research agencies including the World Bank.

One of her greatest pleasures came from the many loving relationships with family and friends both growing up in England and in the many places she lived. The last 3 years of her life were spent at the Murano Senior Living residence in Seattle, which was a very welcoming environment. She particularly valued her time working with the Library Committee and the Art Group where she made many close friends, and where she was proud to have helped strengthen these two popular parts of Murano life.

Quilting and fiber arts were among her passions, and she had fond memories of the different fiber arts groups with whom she worked in Oregon. She took great pleasure from the fact that she was invited by Murano to present her fiber art creations in a joint art show with Mike entitled "Journeys: Reflections from a life of travel". The 3 month show ended one week before she passed.

CHAPTER ONE: 1942 – 1961

Early Years

Despite growing up in post-war England and living through the food rationing and other deprivations of the 1950's, by all reports Elizabeth had a happy childhood, getting on well with her two brothers, and spending weeks in the summers on her grandparents' 6 acre smallholding farm - which she loved. Her friends report she was a witty, friendly and bright student, who seemed well adjusted and self-assured. At an early age she developed her lifelong love for literature and was an avid reader.



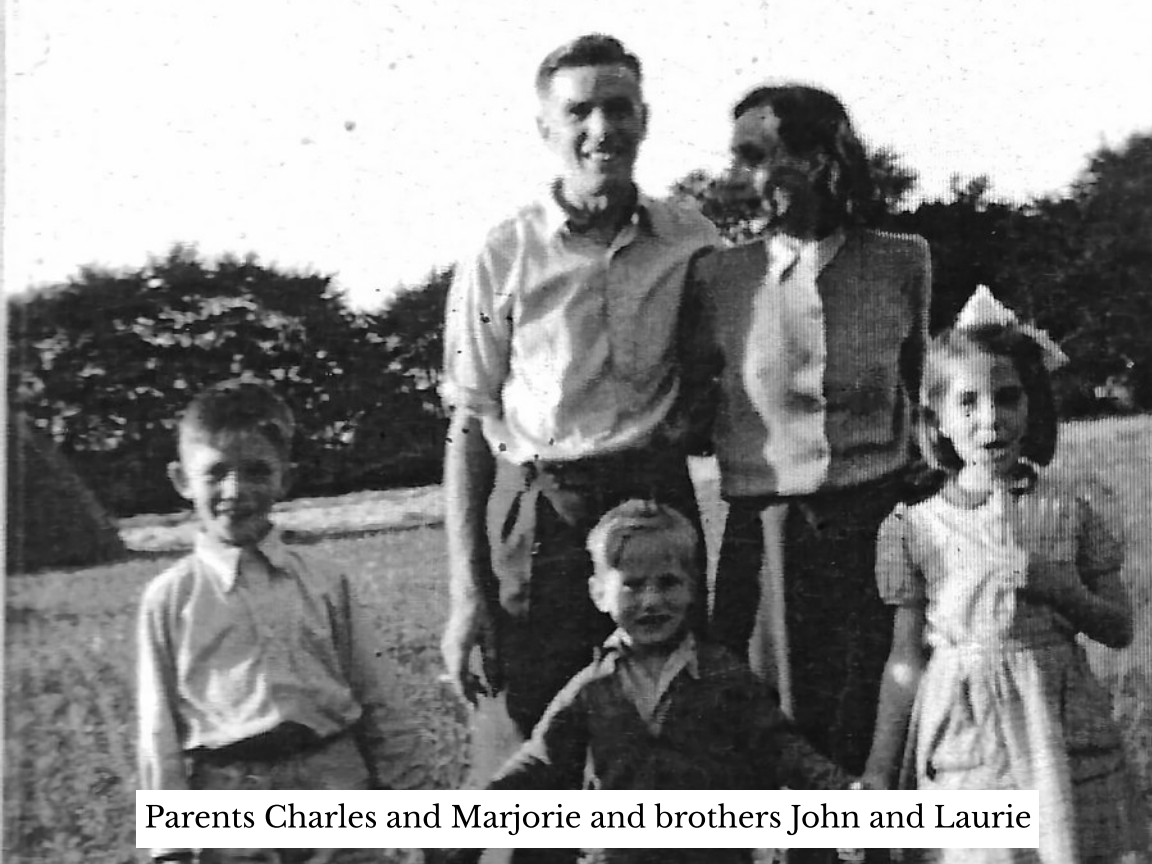
Elizabeth, age 4

Early Childhood

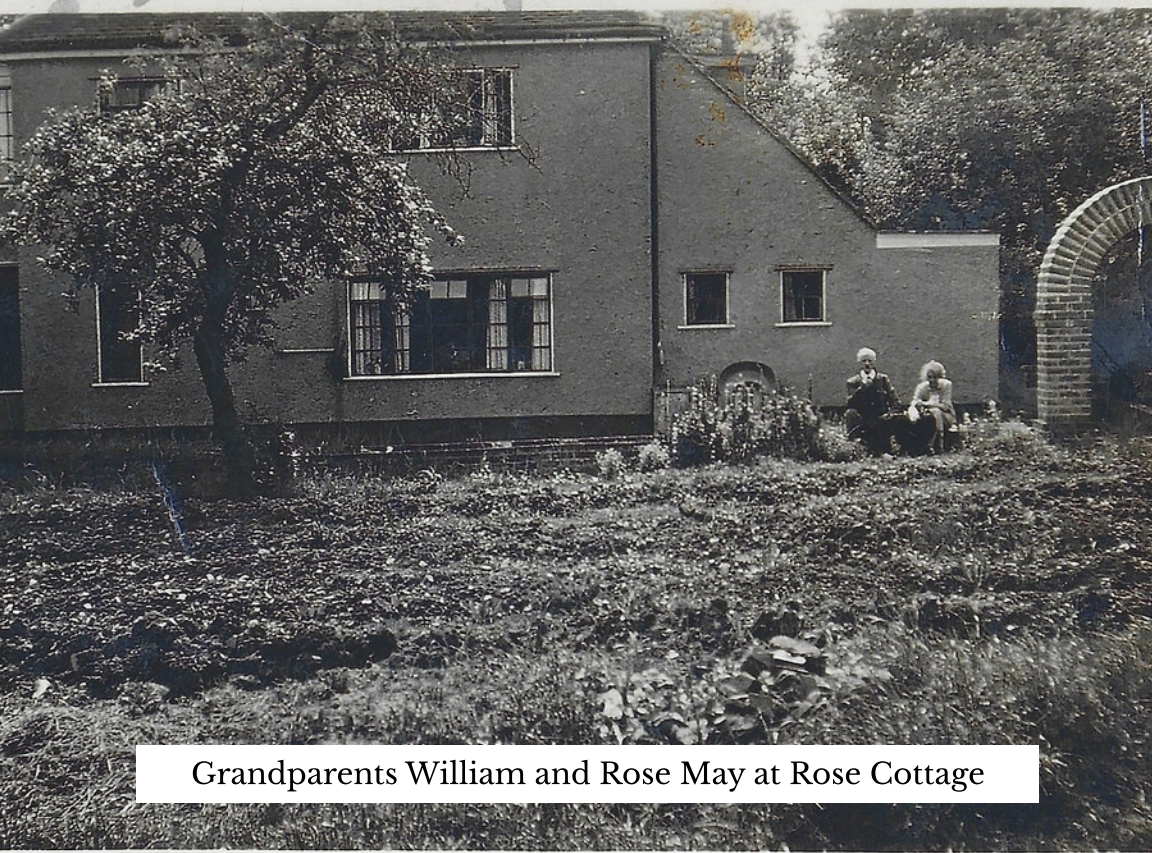
Elizabeth (Jean) Russell was born in Coulsdon, just south of London in May 1942 during the Second World War. She was the second of three children with an older brother John, and a younger brother Laurie. Having two rowdy brothers, she learned how to stick up for herself. However, by all accounts, the three of them got on quite well together.

Her earliest wartime memory was her annoyance that, when the war ended, the neighbors' children were allowed to stay up to watch the demolition of their Anderson bomb shelter, while she had to go to bed at her normal time. She still remembers this injustice. She gradually became aware through ration books and food scarcity of the strain under which her parents were living, and the challenges of finding food to feed 3 growing children in post-war England.

When she was young, the family spent long summers with her grandparents in Dunmow, in rural Essex. She has very fond memories of Rose Cottage, the 6 acre small-holding where she and her brothers used to play. Rose Cottage was an ideal place for young children to roam free, and where the pig, cow and chickens were treated like family members. The sow reliably produced a batch of piglets every year which helped pay the taxes.



Parents Charles and Marjorie and brothers John and Laurie



Grandparents William and Rose May at Rose Cottage

School Years

During the war, sharing a single-family home, including a bathroom and toilet, with another family was stressful. Soon after, the family moved to nearby Sanderstead, sharing a lovely old house divided into 3 spacious apartments and a large rambling garden with two other families; somewhat inconvenient for adults but providing an idyllic place to play outside for children. Finally, when Elizabeth was 12, the family was able to rent their own house in Coulsdon.

She changed schools several times as the family moved from one house to another. When she was 11 she entered Purley County Grammar School for Girls, where she met Rosemarie Park and later Susan Budd who have remained life-long friends. The Purley High School had separate girls' and boys' schools, and the girls' school teachers struggled to keep the two sexes apart. The girls were let out of school 20 minutes before the boys so they could safely get on the bus before the boys were let loose.

Elizabeth has fond memories of her high school teachers, who were of a very high caliber. Many had never married because so many men of their generation had died in the First World War. The teachers instilled a love for literature and languages, which stayed with her throughout her life. Her mother, also an avid reader, helped inspire this love of books, and when each child reached their fifth birthday, they were taken to the public library to ceremonially receive their own library card.



May, Rose, and Spurgeon families



William May gives Rose one rose for every grandchild

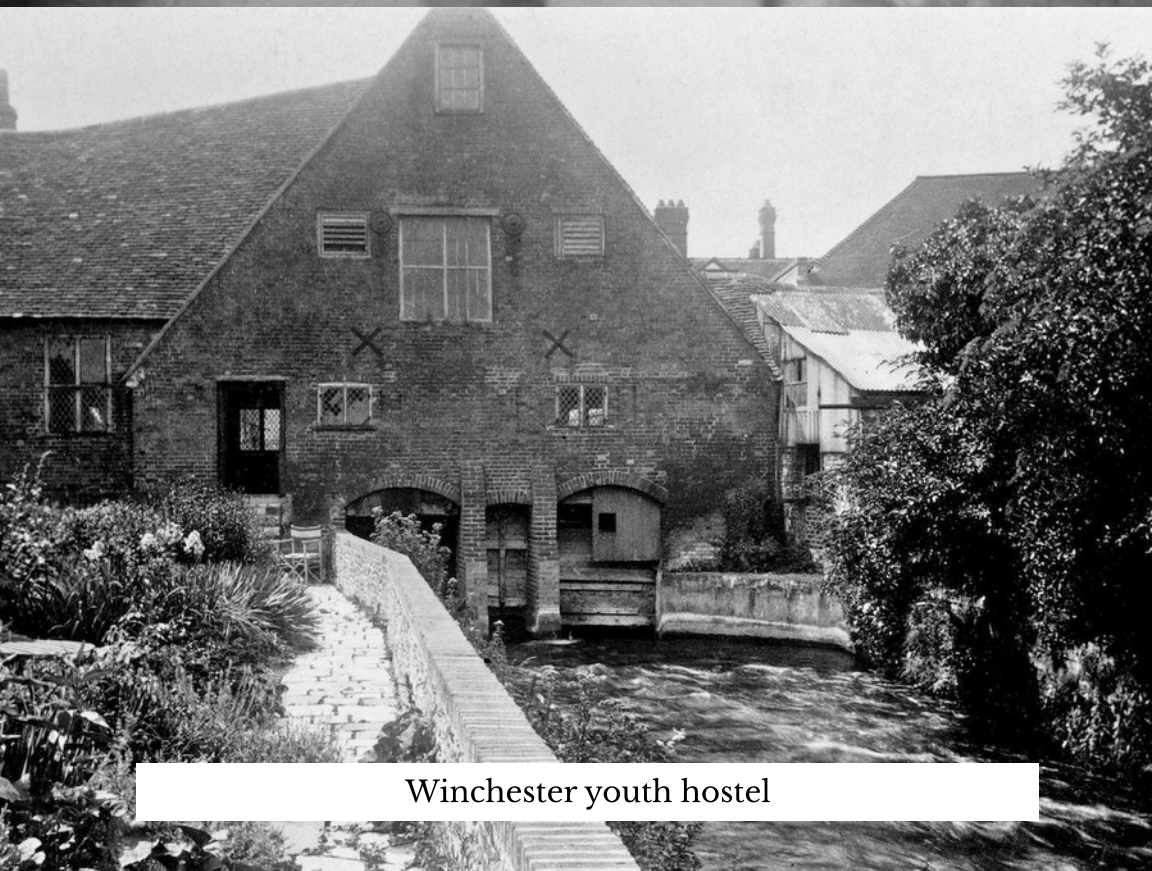
Horse Riding and Early Travels

Like many young girls, she wanted to learn to ride a horse, and she was able to cover the costs of the riding school through delivering newspapers and working at a blood donation center sterilizing syringes. For several years she was also an active member of the Junior Red Cross.

She already had the roots of her wanderlust and whenever possible she, Rosemary, and Susan would go on a youth hostel holiday, visiting different parts of England. In those days you were not allowed to travel to a youth hostel by car or bus, and they would sometimes have a 20 mile walk each day from one hostel to the next.



Elizabeth and Rosemarie youth hosteling, age 15



Winchester youth hostel

CHAPTER TWO: 1961 – 1964

College Days

College was a happy period in her life, with lots of new experiences. She left home for the first time and was able to satisfy her dream to travel, to pursue her love for languages and literature, and to develop a whole new group of friends - many of whom shared her political views. Soon after graduation from Grammar School she met Mike, with whom she would spend the rest of her life. She really enjoyed her year in France. Whereas she had a small group of close friends at Grammar school, at college she blossomed out, with a larger group of politically active friends, and she became much more outgoing.



The University of Leicester, 1963

Leicester University

Elizabeth was the first person in her family to attend university and did not have a clear idea what career she would pursue. However, she had a yen to travel, and one of the appeals of the language program at Leicester University was spending a year in France as an *assistante anglaise*, teaching English to young women student teachers. She lived in Beauvais, about an hour North of Paris by train. Whenever she had time and money she would go to Paris to visit museums (the Rodin museum was one of her favorites), attend some classes at the Sorbonne and enjoy the ambience.

Leicester was still quite traditional and students were encouraged to wear a gown when they met with their professor. Her professor assumed all of the language students planned to spend their careers teaching French.

After the first year in the college dorm, she moved out and shared a house with a group of fairly radical students, and with a house-owner who had been active in protest movements. This was her first experience of living independently.



Elizabeth



Mike

Meeting Mike

The summer after graduating from grammar school in 1964, she wanted to visit Italy with her friend Rosemarie who had an Italian boyfriend who invited them to Salerno in Sicily. To fund the trip, she got a summer job at the Butlins Holiday Camp in Clackton where she worked as a waitress serving 3 meals a day to the “campers”—families looking for an economical vacation. Serving hungry campers, she lost more than 10 pounds. She met Mike, who had a myriad of jobs at Butlins—brewing huge pots of tea, spreading butter on countless loaves of bread in the fish and chips shop, and cleaning windows. They hit it off and agreed to stay in touch—which they did.

Italy was Elizabeth’s first trip out of the UK. They had a great time and after the somewhat depressing post-war England, everything seemed very exotic, including small things like being served Coca Cola in a glass with ice.

Over the next 4 years Mike regularly hitchhiked between London and Leicester. He also came over to Beauvais where Elizabeth was teaching English and they enjoyed some wild times together in Paris. On one trip, probably after a few glasses of wine, Mike proposed to her on the Place de la Concorde.



Dining hall at Butlin's Family Camp



Elizabeth and Rosemarie (front) with other servers

Adventures in France and Germany

While they had very little money, Elizabeth and Mike managed to finance several trips to France and Germany where they hitchhiked, stayed in youth hostels and ate lots of cheap food and wine. When their funds ran low on one trip to Paris, they slept under bridges and in railway stations. The bridges were not as romantic as in the songs, and Elizabeth still complains about rats running across her neck.

On one of their hitchhiking trips in France, they stopped in a roadside cafe. They were approached by an elderly and rather drunk Frenchman who was delighted to know they were British. He announced to everyone that the British had been the allies of France, and he regaled them with his wartime adventures fighting side-by-side with the British. When they told him they were hitch-hiking, he announced he would arrange a ride for them. So, quite drunk by now, he staggered into the middle of the road waving his arms. A startled driver screeched to a halt, and our new friend announced, “You must give these two young people a ride because they are British and I fought beside them in the war”. He kindly agreed to give them a lift, and they eventually made it to Marseille and then Corsica.



Pont au Change, Paris, 1960



Black Forest, Germany

CHAPTER THREE: 1965

Marriage and Life in London

Elizabeth and Mike were married in a Quaker meeting in Brentwood, Essex on July 25, 1964. While adjusting to married life, Elizabeth had her first experience with a regular job, and in fact she had 5 different jobs including translation and teaching ESL. While the year was quite hectic, she enjoyed both married and work life, and developed a wider circle of friends. She learned that she was able to adapt easily to many different work situations and proved to be very outgoing and to easily make friends.



Elizabeth and Mike at their wedding, July 25 1964

Getting Married

We were married at a Quaker meeting house in Essex on July 25, 1964 after knowing each other for 3 years. After the wedding we jumped on a train to Yugoslavia (the trip was financed with money we had received as wedding gifts, intended to buy an elegant dinner service). On arrival in Dubrovnik we found a *sputnik* office that helped tourists find accommodation. While in the office, we saw someone running off with our luggage. When Mike caught up with him, the man just nodded and pointed down the street. We finally realized he was taking us to his apartment. When we arrived, there was a hurried discussion among the household members, and the protesting grandfather was pushed out of his room to make way for the honeymooners.



The family at the wedding reception

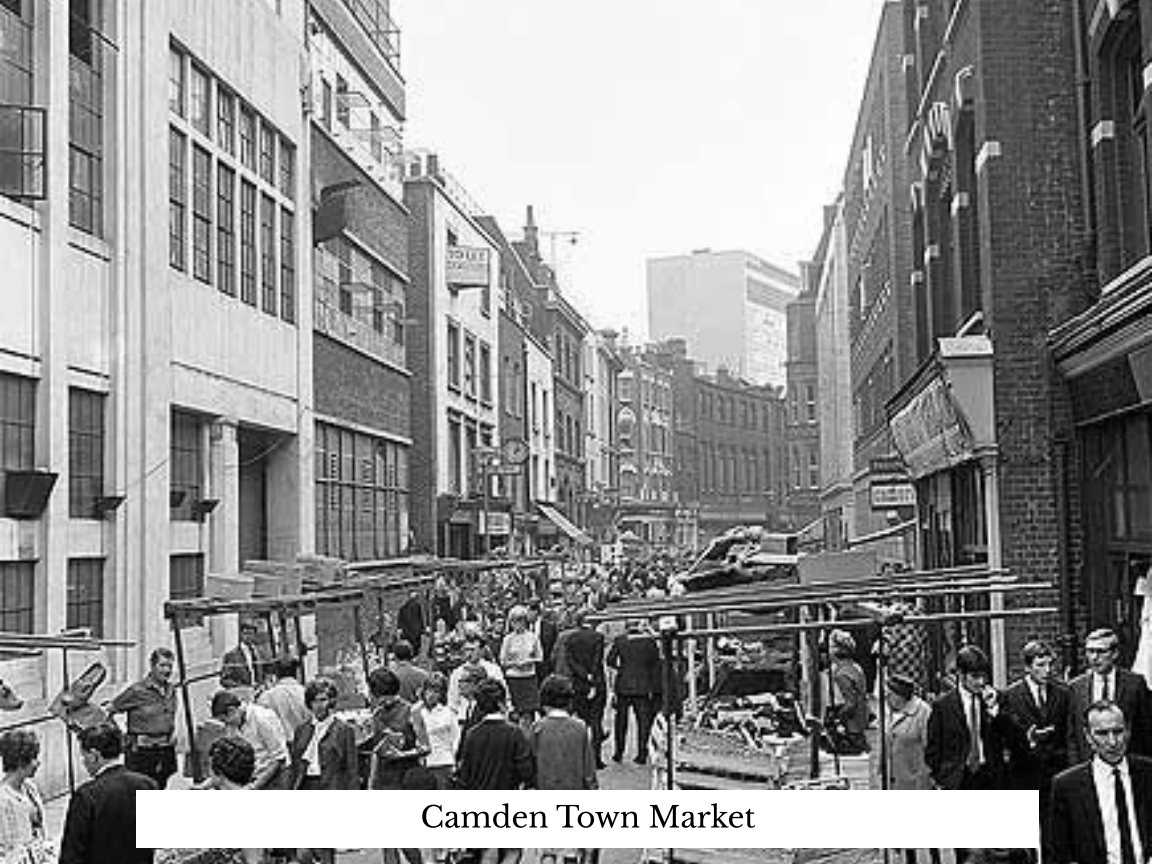


Cutting the cake

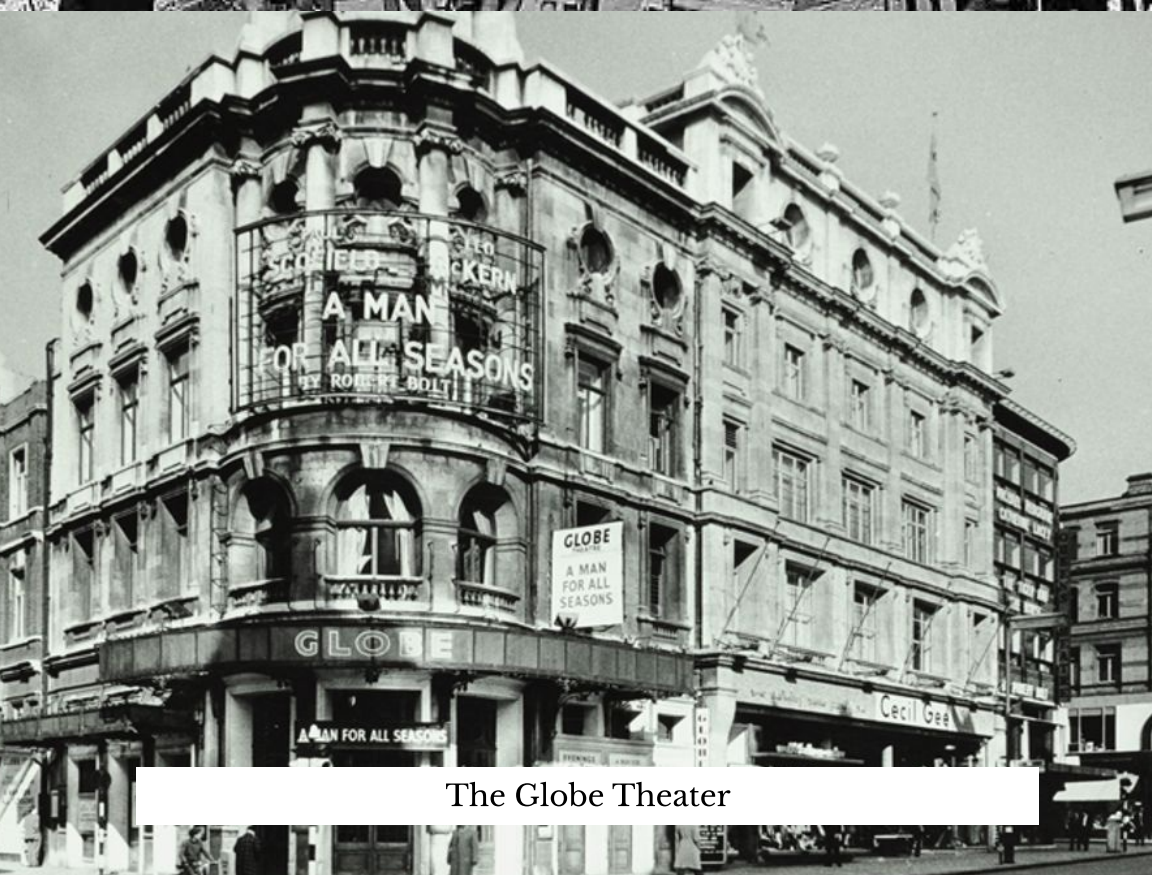
Life in London

In London we developed a large group of friends, and we had an active social and cultural life with frequent visits to the theater and museums. We came to know London quite well.

After a great honeymoon in Dubrovnik, we moved into our apartment in Camden Town, in North London. During the course of the year, Elizabeth held several jobs: teaching ESL and translation, as an assistant to a company aiming to provide wider career opportunities for women, and as a telephone interviewer with a management consulting company where Mike was working.



Camden Town Market



The Globe Theater

Off to Venezuela

We assumed we would settle in London, where Mike already had a job, and Elizabeth would have time to decide the career she would pursue. However, we both wished to do some international travel before settling down in London. We received an invitation to work for two years with a voluntary organization in Venezuela, but with very little information on what they did. Although we were not quite sure where Venezuela was - other than being somewhere in Latin America, we accepted the invitation.

Mike was rushing to complete his doctoral dissertation, which was approved two weeks before we left. He was told he would have a job with the consulting company when we returned to England, so in July 1965, together with a large metal trunk - which included a bottle of diarrhea medicine, we boarded a plane for Venezuela, assuming we would be back in two years. Little did we know what fate had in store for us!



Caracas, 1960s (Background: Los Palos Grandes, where we lived)



Language training group

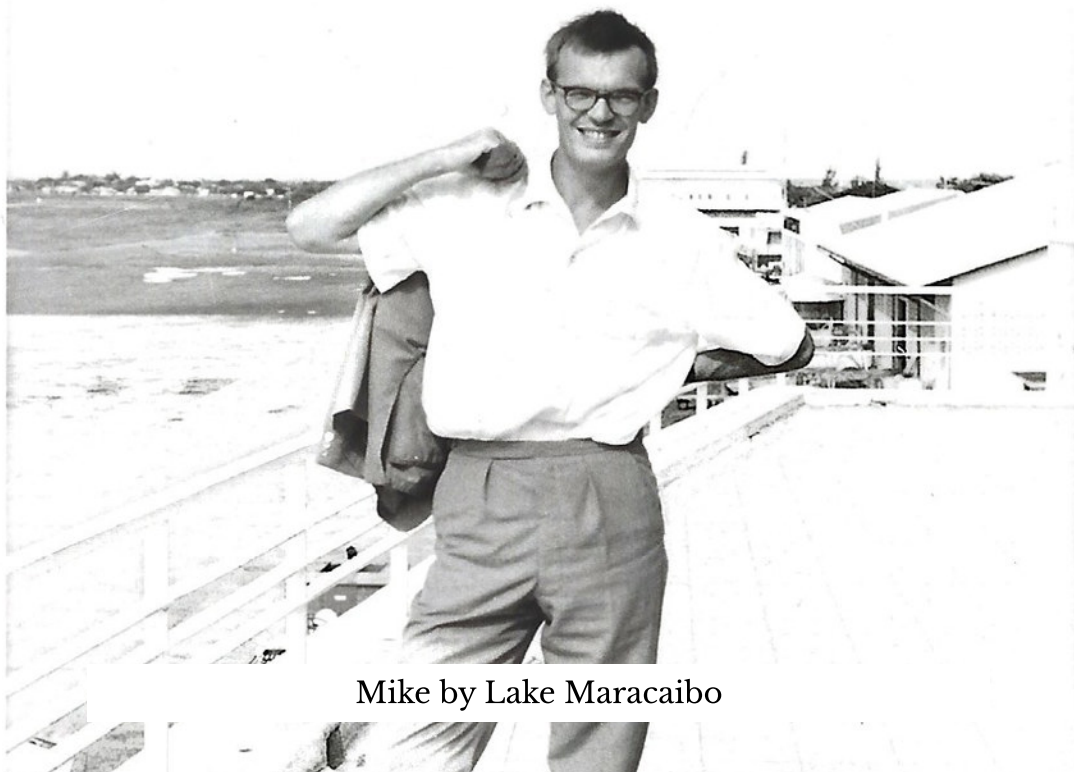
CHAPTER FOUR: 1965 -1975

Bienvenidos a Venezuela!

Our first impression of Caracas was of a dynamic, bustling city, full of noise and music and with a pleasantly warm climate. Traffic regulations were largely ignored, and it seemed that everything was transported on motor scooters. We were alarmed to see passengers on scooters facing backwards and holding a large pane of glass, a bed mattress or perhaps a small child, while maneuvering between buses and cars.



Merida in the Andes Mountains



Mike by Lake Maracaibo

Working in the Barrios

Accion en Venezuela was a not-for-profit organization staffed by Venezuelans and American volunteers. The program worked in the *barrios* - the shanty towns in the hills surrounding the capital, and which by 1965 housed about half a million people. As the city grew, land values rose and the owners became interested in recovering their land. To defend themselves the *barrio* communities sought the support of local political parties, and most barrios became highly politicized. So we found ourselves working in a highly politicized environment, with frequent harassment by the police.

We were working to improve the physical infrastructure of the *barrios* and to help communities mobilize to obtain services such as electricity, roads and schools.

Needless to say, having only rudimentary Spanish was a challenge, but Elizabeth had an ear for languages and quickly picked up a working knowledge of Spanish. In addition to being the only Brits, we were among the very few *accionistas* who were married. Elizabeth found working in the barrios challenging but fascinating, and the lessons learned affected the rest of her life.



Barrio in Caracas. Note the political slogans.



Barrios Las Minas, where Mike worked

Matthew and Martin Arrive

In 1967, when we were beginning to think of returning to England, our first son, Matthew, announced his arrival. Fortunately Mike was offered a full-time staff position in *Accion*, so we decided to stay in Venezuela.

Elizabeth had to end her work in the barrios, but she was able to use her language skills to teach ESL. Later, after gaining her certification, she worked as a public interpreter with an agency for a number of years—enabling her to combine working from home with raising two children.

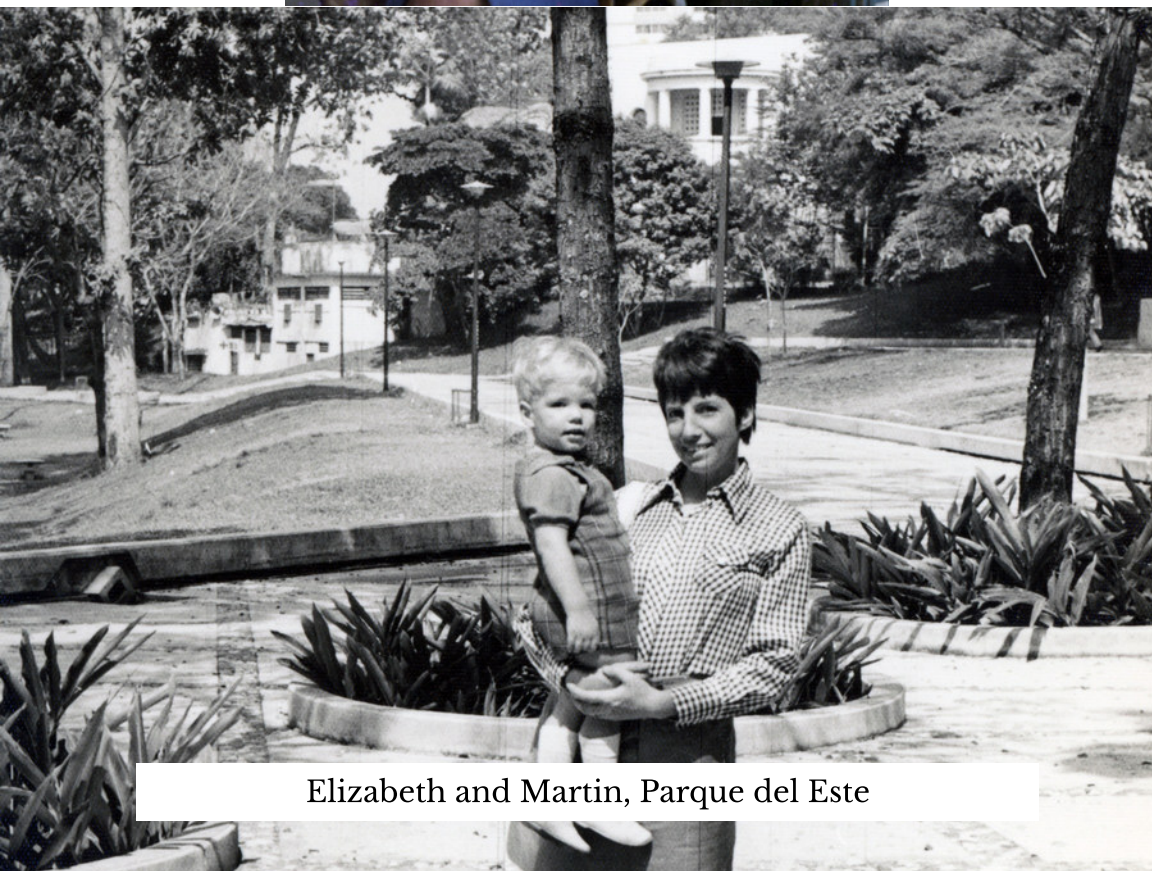
None of the American volunteers had children, so Elizabeth had to rely on the advice of the older Venezuelan women in Accion, and on Dr. Spock's "Baby and Child Care."

When Matthew was 6 weeks old, there was a very large earthquake which killed several hundred people in Caracas. We had to sleep in the street for a couple of nights until someone from Accion found us and we were able to move to a safer location.

The family was soon able to move to a bigger apartment, near to the Parque del Este, the main city park. The following year Martin arrived, much to Matthew's annoyance, as he did not wish to share his mother.



Matthew, age 6 months



Elizabeth and Martin, Parque del Este

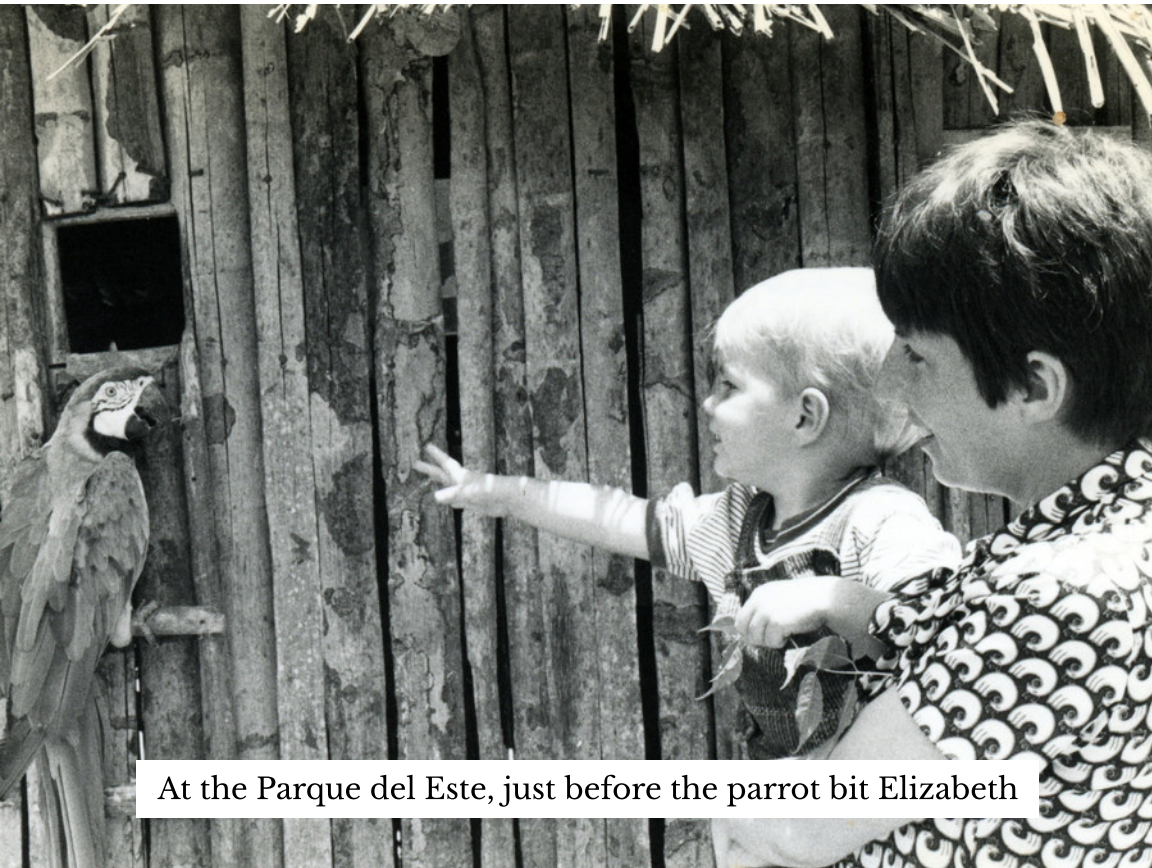
Growing up in Venezuela

The boys seemed to enjoy the Venezuelan lifestyle and quickly became bilingual with equal numbers of English and Spanish speaking friends. The huge Parque del Este, with its zoo, wild animals and a train that you could ride on, was one of their favorite places. One day, we noticed that Martin had vanished. When we found him about 20 minutes later, Elizabeth asked him crossly “where were you?” He looked at her with large innocent eyes and said “I knew where I was!”. There were some large and brightly colored parrots in the Parque that the boys were very nervous of. Elizabeth, to show that you did not have to be afraid of parrots, put her hand through the bars of the cage to stroke it. It immediately bit her hand!

Although Elizabeth came to enjoy Venezuela, she admitted later that when the boys were small, and Mike was frequently traveling, she would often lie awake wondering how she and the boys would cope if something happened to Mike on one of his travels. She remembers the moment when she decided that the easiest way to cope with uncertainty was to face the possible problems face on, and after that she began to fully enjoy all that Venezuela had to offer.



The club Hermandad Gallega



At the Parque del Este, just before the parrot bit Elizabeth

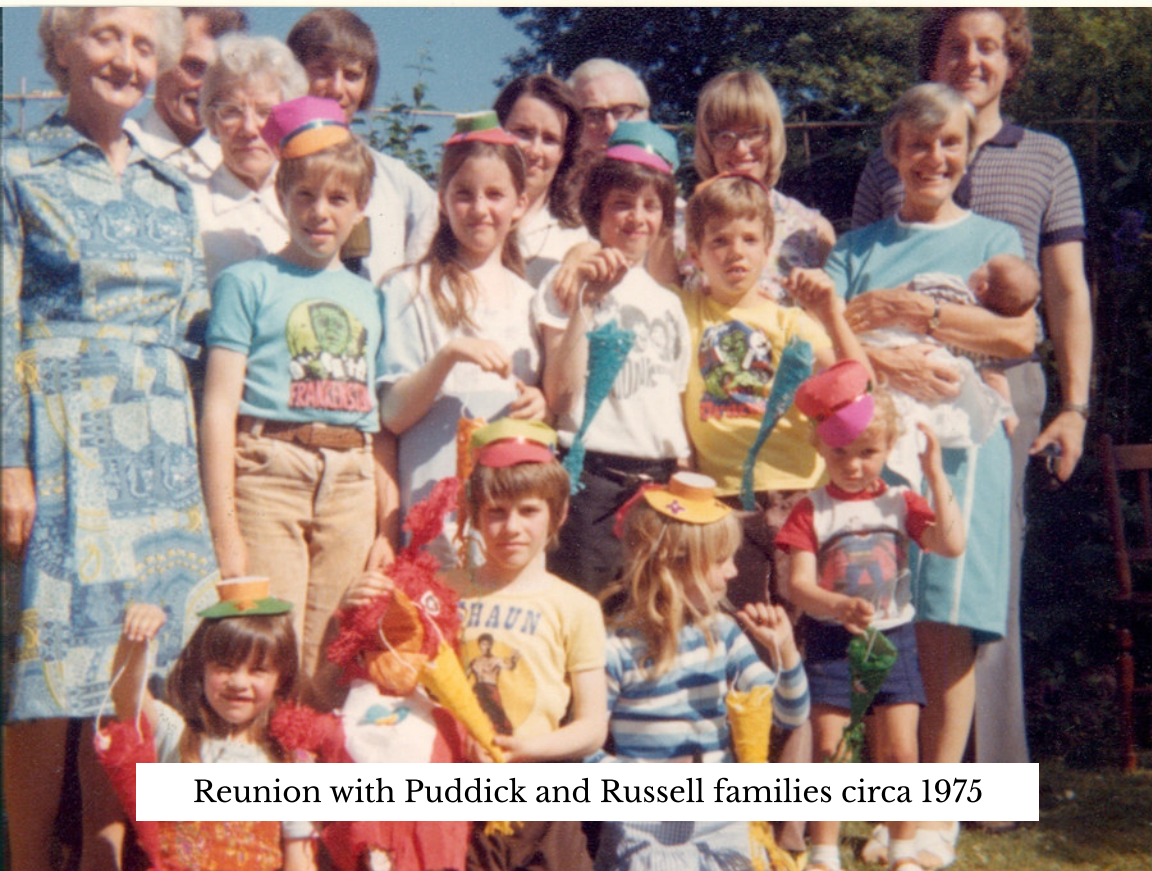
Getting Back to England

We managed to get back to England every two years and usually every year when the children were small, and our parents greatly enjoyed seeing their grandchildren. The testimonial section at the end of the book includes many memories of the visits to England.

On one trip Elizabeth bought a very elegant trouser suit which, on our return to Venezuela she proudly wore to one of the fashionable movie theaters in Caracas. To her great annoyance, she was not allowed into the cinema because in the 1970's trouser suits were not considered suitable attire for young ladies. One of her friends faced the same ban, but she went into the rest room and took off the trouser part of the suit, and she was then admitted to the cinema essentially wearing a very short mini-skirt which was considered suitable. Go figure!



Reunion with John Russell's extended family



Reunion with Puddick and Russell families circa 1975

Exploring South America

As Mike became involved with Accion International, Elizabeth was able to join him on trips to Colombia, Peru and Brazil.

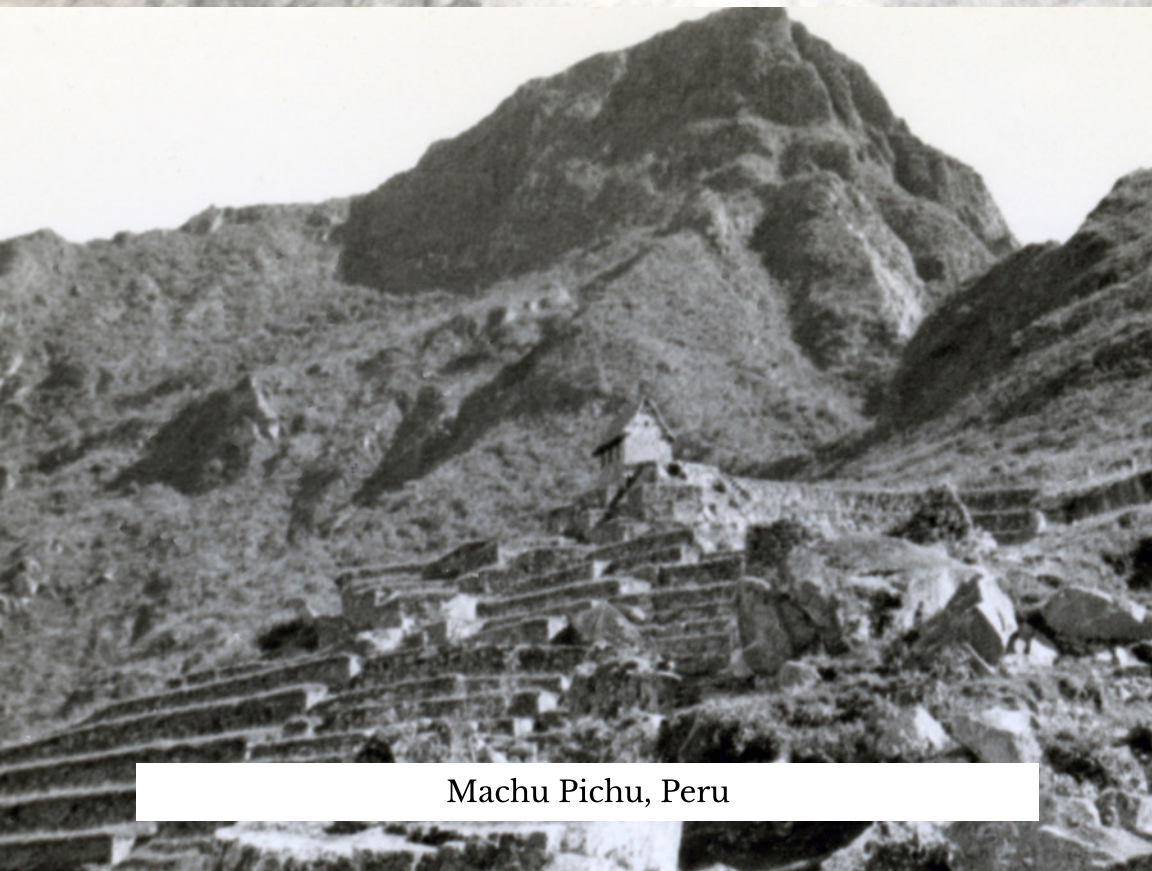
When the boys were old enough to stay with the maid, Elizabeth joined Mike on a work trip to Curacao. In addition to the beauty of the island, and the fascinating Dutch-Caribbean culture, for Elizabeth it was a great luxury to be able to take a shower without having two small boys hammering on the bathroom door. However, when we got back, the maid sighed with relief. One day the boys had managed to lock her on the balcony and she had to shout down from the fourth floor to ask someone to call the fire brigade to rescue her.

As the boys grew older, they also enjoyed some international trips. On one memorable trip to Machu Picchu in Peru, Matthew came down with an extremely painful ear infection made worse by the altitude (over 10,000 feet). It was quite a challenge to find a doctor in the middle of the night in the village where we were staying.

After 10 years, we were ready to move on. Fortunately Mike was offered a consulting position with the World Bank in El Salvador, so after saying goodbye to our many friends and many happy memories, we moved to El Salvador for 3 years.



Matthew and Martin in Machu Pichu, Peru



Machu Pichu, Peru

CHAPTER FIVE: 1975 – 1978

El Salvador

El Salvador was a dramatic contrast to Venezuela, and Elizabeth enjoyed the smaller country and the very friendly people. As the boys were now 7 and 8, she had more time to develop her friendships and pursue her professional career. She really enjoyed the beautiful scenery, the lovely beaches and the pleasant climate. Unfortunately, in the background was the deteriorating security situation and the knowledge that a civil war was looming, but we were fortunate to leave just before the war fully broke out.



Elizabeth with Mike's mother Judith in El Salvador

Life in El Salvador

El Salvador was a very small country, with beautiful mountains, lakes, and beaches. The people were very welcoming, and by now all the family were fluent in Spanish. Mike had a three year assignment with the Salvadoran Foundation for Low-cost Housing. We found a very attractive house with a large garden in a small *colonia*, where we inherited a live-in maid (Martha) and a gardener from the previous tenants. Martin and Martha's son Alberto set up a small business selling green mangoes in a spicy sauce to the local security guards.

Elizabeth and Martha became good friends, and they would work together in the evenings making a large clipped wool carpet. The neighbors and the British community complained to Elizabeth that the wages she was paying were too high, and that maids did not need all of that money. Martha always referred to Mike as "The Doctor", and she would ask Elizabeth things like "Could you please tell the Doctor that there is a dead mouse in the kitchen, and could he please remove it?"

We planned many fun activities for the boys including parties with creative games including relay costume races where the kids had to put on adult size clothes and race across the garden.



Home in Colonia Avila, with Quetzaltepeque Volcano



Martin, Martha, and Matthew with rug

Enjoying El Salvador

A fisherman would arrive with fish he had caught that morning, and he would squat in the front porch and fillet the fish with his machete. It was forbidden to carry machetes in the city, and we learned later that he was given a machete permit from the police in return for reporting any suspicious people visiting the gringo families.

We now had a car, so we were able to travel all over the country and to neighboring Guatemala.

The British Club was close by and Elizabeth and the boys spent many happy hours by the pool. We also made many good friends there. Elizabeth performed in several of the Christmas pantomimes.

Although everyone was aware of the tense political situation, Elizabeth really enjoyed El Salvador. The boys were at school all day, and she had time to develop friendships and pursue her professional career as a public interpreter. She loved the beautiful scenery with lakes, mountains, accessible and beautiful beaches and a very agreeable climate.



Elizabeth as “Plot” in the Christmas pantomime



Political graffiti in El Salvador

Community and Friends

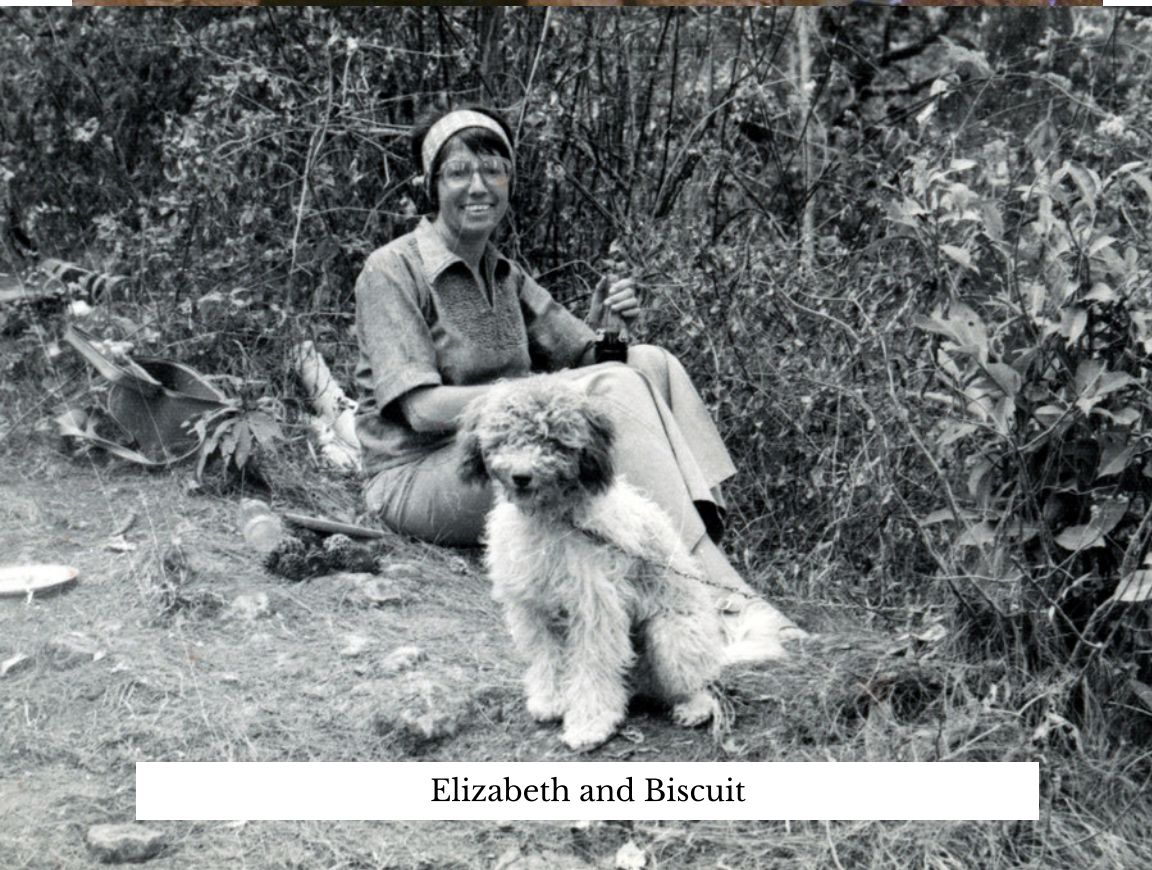
The Salvadorans were very welcoming and family oriented. The family were frequently invited to spend the day with Edgardo, a member of Mike's research team and his family. We also visited Edgardo's family coffee farm where Matthew and Martin, unbeknownst to their parents, were taught to shoot.

The housing program was similar to Habitat for Humanity, but working in a more dangerous environment as everyone knew that a civil war was looming. The city became very tense as the civil war approached, and several times the boys had to be driven home through streets filled with burning cars. By the end of the three year contract the family knew it was time to leave, although we left behind many happy memories.

In 1978 Mike was offered a job with the World Bank and in July the family moved to Washington DC. Soon after moving to the US, Edgardo, his wife and two small children were forced to leave the country because of the growing violence, and they stayed with us for several months.



The self-help housing project where we worked



Elizabeth and Biscuit

Washington, D.C.

The move to Washington was very liberating for Elizabeth. She found many soul mates with whom she could freely discuss issues such as the status of women or politics, in a way that was difficult for a woman of our age-group to do in Latin America at the time we were living there. She was also respected as a professional and not just a mother. A much wider range of work and professional opportunities were available to her, and she experienced many different jobs.

For translators, unless they spoke Russian, Chinese, or Japanese, it was hard to find employment, so finally in her forties she took a deep breath and went back to school to obtain first her Masters and then her Doctorate in Sociology. For several years along the way she worked with a non-profit conducting drug and alcohol related surveys with parent-led prevention groups and schools.



Elizabeth on the National Mall

Arriving in DC

In July 1978 we arrived in Washington, D.C., and one year later we were able to buy a small Cape Cod house in Bethesda, North of DC. It was a very friendly neighborhood and we developed lasting friendships with several neighbors, including Chet and Rebecca. Chet was the only African American in the neighborhood, and we learned a lot about the challenges facing African Americans, even in the Nation's capital. We remained friends for life and they later visited us several times in Oregon. Their son Nathan was a few years younger than Matthew and Martin, who often baby-sat for him - and, from our house we could see Nathan jumping up and down on the table or being swung upside down while in Martin's care.

Our other close neighbors were "big" Joe and "little" Joe Raincrow Neil - members of a band of the Shawnee tribe. "Big" Joe was the medicine man and tribal leader, and also Director of International Studies at American University. Our two mothers got on very well with "big" Joe, and would spend hours chatting with him. He also wore his tribal regalia for them, with the incredibly beautiful silver and turquoise adorning necklaces and belts.



Judith Bamberger and Marjorie Russell with "Big" Joe Neil



Mike with neighbors Chet and Rebecca

Enjoying D.C

It was during our time in Bethesda that Elizabeth began to seriously build a garden and among other things helped to found the Bethesda garden club.

One of the things she enjoyed after moving to the States was that she found “soul-mates” in whom she could confide and discuss anything. In Latin America she was not able to have these kinds of open discussions with our Venezuelan friends.

One of the benefits of working with the World Bank was that after a certain number of days of work travel, the Bank paid for the spouse to accompany their partner on a business class trip to anywhere the staff member was working. Elizabeth loved any opportunity to travel and over the 20 years that Mike worked with the Bank, she visited over 50 countries in Europe, Africa , Latin America and Asia. On one memorable, but exhausting trip, she accompanied Mike to Cyprus, Greece, Germany, Senegal, Uganda, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Hong Kong.



Elizabeth and Mike at the Taj Mahal, India



Elizabeth in her garden

Visitors From Over the Pond

The two mothers came to visit and had a great time. They were very adventuresome but had no sense of how to navigate a new city. One day Elizabeth was coming home when she heard shrieks of laughter - the two mothers had got on the commuter bus to Bethesda but they had no idea how to get back. They asked the driver to take them to “where the houses were”. Fortunately Elizabeth recognized their laughter and was able to retrieve them.

DC was a popular destination for the English side of the family, and sisters and brothers in law, cousins and nephews all came to stay. At that time, sneakers and sportswear cost half as much in the US as they did in England, so everyone went home loaded with stuff from the Nike store. The testimonials at the end of the book includes several memories of these visits to D.C.



Mike's sister Judith with husband John, Helen, and Andrew



The mothers, Matt and Martin, Susan and Penny

Back to School and Work

Washington had a very lively cultural life and we were frequent visitors to all of the Smithsonian museums and to the socially progressive local theaters. Through the World Bank we also had a wide circle of friends from every part of the world. It was a tradition to invite groups to your house to share national foods, so this was also very exciting.

Elizabeth enrolled at the University of Maryland, where she gained a Masters and later a Doctorate in Sociology. She was able to combine World Bank research data with her on-the-ground experience in Latin America to focus her doctoral research on challenges facing female-headed households in El Salvador. She also taught several classes in the Sociology Department.

Over the years she had various jobs in social research, including an assignment that took her to ten different states all over the country for a study on parent-led anti-drug groups, and study in D.C. and nearby states on the effects of tobacco advertising on young children.

Later she worked as a consultant in the World Bank Latin American and Caribbean gender program, where she was able to apply her language skills and extensive experiences from Latin America.



Elizabeth's doctoral graduation



At home in Bethesda with Mike

Moving to Portland

As Matthew and Martin had both moved to the West Coast, when Mike retired in 2000 we decided to move West. In late 2000 we made several trips to Seattle and Portland, and we found a house which we both liked in Portland and we moved in early 2001.

As we had already purchased the house, we decided to host Thanksgiving for the family in our new house. At this point the house was completely empty. We just had one mattress on the floor in the bedroom, and we had to rent tables, chairs and eating utensils for 15 people. The grandkids were delighted to have an empty house to run around and everyone seemed to have a good time.

We chose Oregon as we preferred the smaller city and slower life-style, and because Martin and Susan lived nearby with Josh and Noah, but we regularly made the 3 hour drive to Seattle to keep in touch with Matthew's side of the family. The whole family got together for Thanksgiving and Christmas. For many years Matt's sons Marcus and Alex came to stay, and all the family got together every summer (and occasionally winter) for vacations at SunRiver in southern Oregon, and for Thanksgiving in Portland. Later we spent a number of happy vacations together in Nescowin on the southern Oregon coast.



Family summer vacation in Sunriver, Oregon



Elizabeth, Matthew, and Mike in Sunriver in winter

Portland, Oregon

We spent nearly 25 years in Oregon and came to know and enjoy all parts of the state on car trips. Elizabeth discovered quilting, which became one of the loves of her life, and revealed both her artistic and organizational skills. Having her own car, she discovered a freedom and sense of adventure she had not previously enjoyed. Our large house became the center of many family activities, including regularly hosting the four grandkids.



Mike and Elizabeth at Silver Falls Park in Oregon

Life in Oregon

We moved to Beaverton, a suburb of Portland, in January 2001 and remained until 2024. The house was twice as large as our Washington home - great for welcoming all the friends and family who came to stay. We also had the luxury of separate art studios, a wood workshop for Mike, and a patio where Elizabeth could experiment with strange smelling chemicals for dying and rusting fabrics.

There was a walled garden where Elizabeth, with the aid of a succession of gardeners, created a very attractive garden that was featured in the local newspaper. When the grandchildren were small, a large area was devoted to a playground with a castle, pond and waterslide.

She particularly enjoyed the beautiful neighborhood with plentiful trees, friendly neighbors and wide-sidewalks bordered by flower-beds and fruit trees. We were grateful for this during COVID as we were able to go for long walks while many people in other areas had to remain indoors.

Martin was already in Portland and soon after we arrived, his family found a house right across the street. It became a common sight to see the two grandchildren crossing the road to our house, followed by the two dogs and the cat.



Marcus, Alex, Noah, and Josh playing in the pond 2002



Elizabeth's garden in Portland

Oregon Opens up a New Life

The move to Oregon represented a new chapter for Elizabeth, with greater freedom and opportunities to explore the beautiful and diverse scenery. Oregon offered us a rich cultural life with theater, art museums, and music. Discovering the rich world and tradition of art quilting and fabric design became a central part of her life as well as creating a network of friends. She also discovered the freedom offered by having her own car, and she loved to jump in the car and head off wherever the whim took her. She often returned not quite sure where she had been, as she would take whatever side road appealed to her.



Elizabeth at a quilting workshop



Painted Hills in Central Oregon

Family Vacations

We regularly made the 3 hour drive to Seattle to keep in touch with Matt's family. Marcus and Alex often came to stay in Portland so the four grandkids kept in touch. Elizabeth was very family oriented and was the driving force in arranging family get-togethers for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other occasions. During these family reunions, Elizabeth helped establish many of the family traditions that continue to this day and which forged a strong and supportive extended family. For many years the whole family got together for a week during the summer at the Sunriver resort in Central Oregon. More recently, the Sunriver get-togethers moved to Christmas, and the summer meetings moved to Newscowin, one of the Southern Oregon beach resorts.



Family vacation at Sunriver



Elizabeth and Mike kayaking on the Deschutes River

Christmas Pudding

In England there is a tradition of making Christmas puddings - a rich, dark, steamed dessert that includes a variety of fruit and is flavoured with rum and brandy. What alarms Americans is that this is mixed with suet, the fat trimmed from around a cow's kidneys, which has a high melting point that makes it useful in cooking. In every country Elizabeth discovered sources for suet, alarming butchers when she explained this would be used to make a dessert.

In Oregon when the family met for Thanksgiving everyone would stir the pudding, take a spoonful and make a wish. Even family members who did not particularly enjoy the pudding came to enjoy making it.

Our nephews and nieces in England fondly recall other traditions she established such as party games, always bringing gifts, and always finding time to chat with everyone. Matthew and Martin recall many of the same games at their parties in Venezuela and El Salvador.



Making the Christmas pudding, Thanksgiving in Seattle



Elizabeth with the flaming Christmas pudding in Beaverton

Quilting

Oregon is one of the main US centers for quilting and fiber arts, and Elizabeth became actively involved with 3 fiber arts groups which became the focus of her social and artistic life. There were also fiber arts workshops and meetings around the state and she became actively involved in the organization of several quilting groups. Sisters, in the high desert, is the Mecca of art quilting and Elizabeth always tried to get to the annual quilt show and workshops. Often the workshops involved trips to the surrounding countryside with its incredible views and clear light. There were also several visits to scrap yards to find metal for rusting to create exotic fiber designs.

Mike tagged along to several meetings and a couple of times he would be having a coffee on his own, and would be adopted by groups of ladies who said “you must be a quilting widower who has been abandoned by your wife”.

Her technical expertise and vision were reflected in the fact that she was able to sell more than a dozen quilts (one was traded for a case of top quality pinot noir!), and her work was shown in many galleries around the state.



The Stitchin' Post in Sisters during the annual quilt show



Elizabeth with "Voices of the Ancestors" at a show in 2022

Quilting Groups

Quilting also enabled her to develop her organizational and networking skills as she traveled around the state, helping to found the Oregon chapter of SAQA (the International Studio Art Quilt Guild), promoting new quilting groups, and helping organize the regional group and shows and conferences. Our large house and garden proved ideal for quilting meetings and lunches, and several times a large tent would be erected in the garden for summer or Christmas parties with the group.

She became particularly attached to the Euro-Quilters, a small group of Brits and one German. In the early years they would work on an art project, or an art challenge, but as time went by, more time was devoted to socializing. In May 2026, two years after we had moved to Seattle, the Euroquilters, Sue, Rosemarie, and Gill, drove up to Seattle for the day, and Murano's Chef Nora laid on a special lunch for them (with salmon, chicken and exotic cheeses) in our apartment. The Euroquilters made for Elizabeth a lovely lap quilt with scenes from Oregon in love and friendship. For the return trip their truck was loaded with 20 boxes of fabrics and quilting tools and books that Elizabeth had collected over the years but could no longer use. It was an emotional day for Elizabeth, both to see her dearest friends, and to say farewell to her fabrics and sewing machines. At the same time she was very happy that everything was finding a good home.



Elizabeth with the Euro Quilters



Quilter meeting at home in Beaverton

Exploring Oregon

Oregon is a beautiful state with a fascinating and complex history, and we had the opportunity to travel to all corners of the State. We enjoyed several trips to East and North East Oregon, where we enjoyed the dramatic scenery, and learning about the wild history of the robber barons and struggles over land rights. We also enjoyed several trips to Southern Oregon to the Gold Coast and trips up the Rogue River on the mail boat.

We greatly enjoyed the magnificent Columbia River (which runs through Portland) and we stayed in many of the delightful hotels along the river. Our favorite was the Skamania Lodge with its magnificent views and wonderful walking trails.



Near Joseph in Eastern Oregon



Mike and Elizabeth in Shevlin Park, Bend

Cannon Beach

Cannon Beach, which was only a 90 minute drive from Portland, was our favorite beach resort and we usually visited two or three times a year, and in all seasons. The steep and winding Route 26, although beautiful when covered with snow, was also icy and treacherous in the winter. On several occasions the road became too dangerous to transit, and we had to unexpectedly extend our stay.

Our favorite place to stay in Cannon Beach was the Seasprite On The Estuary, where we enjoyed watching the seagulls at the turn of the tide awaiting the small fishes and other creatures swept down the river. We also enjoyed watching the shadowy figures of the elks wading across the creek at dusk en route to the town center to eat all the flowers in the boxes outside the stores (much to the annoyance of the store-owners). The apartment had a beautiful view of both the beach and the estuary, and first thing in the morning Elizabeth would sit with her first cup of coffee watching the changing colors of the sky and the water; and she would sit there again as the sun was setting.

In November 2025, the whole family joined us for what we knew might be Elizabeth's last visit to Cannon Beach. We spent the last evening enjoying a meal at our favorite restaurant, "The Wayfarer", followed by a show at the Community Theater. It brought Elizabeth great joy and satisfaction to share the evening with the family that she has so lovingly helped raise.



Elizabeth on the estuary in Cannon Beach



Cannon Beach seen from the Ecola Park Headlands

Seattle, Washington

Following a particularly severe storm, we decided it was time to move, and we ended up at Murano Senior Living in Seattle. We were attracted by the large, modern apartments with incredible light and views, and being close to Matthew and family.

Murano is warm and welcoming, with very interesting people, and a wide range of activities, and we quickly settled in. Elizabeth became very active in the Art Group and made it her mission to revitalize the library and to find it a better location. By the time she stepped down from her leadership roles, working with Lois, the library had moved to a spacious and attractive location, more shelves had been acquired, and a new committee was running things. Working with Marilyn, the Art Group had put on 10 classes during a 2 year period, and 3 art shows.



Murano Senior Living in Seattle

Moving to Seattle

As we grew older, we recognized that maintenance of a large, old house would become an increasing challenge. We assumed we would probably move to a retirement residence in the Portland area, and we had found one we felt would work for us although we did not fall in love with it. However, Martin moved to Bend, a nearly 4 hour drive from Portland, so we began to think of Seattle, where Matthew and his family lived. As fate would have it, in early 2024 we lost power for 10 days and Matthew happened to be collecting Alex from a nearby college and invited us to Seattle until power was restored.

While in Seattle, we decided to visit retirement homes and fell in love with Murano Senior Living, with its large, modern apartments with beautiful natural light and dramatic views of the water and the mountains. So over a complementary lunch, including a well-made whiskey sour (for Mike, not Elizabeth), we made a long-term financial projection on a table napkin. We both agreed it was more expensive than we could afford, but nonetheless decided to move in 2 months later!



Mike and Elizabeth on the rooftop deck on moving day



Marcus, Matt, Juliana, Elizabeth, Mike, Alex, and Martin

Getting Settled at Murano

Murano proved to be a very friendly and dynamic environment where everyone was welcoming and very interested to learn our life story. We in turn were fascinated to hear about the many different lives other residents had led and their wide range of impressive careers. Elizabeth soon found herself working with Lois Steinberg to revitalize the library and with Marilyn Bergstrom in launching the incipient Art Group (see the following section).

Murano had a tradition that you could invite anyone to lunch, so we were quickly able to meet a wide range of people.

Our apartment was quite spacious, and both Elizabeth and Mike were able to find space for both their office and art projects. The art room was also always open and Elizabeth worked there on several mixed media art projects.

Elizabeth bought a sofa bed, and she was delighted that we were able to host regular visits from Martin and Heidi and Josh and Noah - none of whom seemed deterred by the 7 hour drive from Bend and the 3 hour trip from Portland.

We both became involved in a wide range of activities at Murano including exercise classes, the book group, music performances, lectures and movies.



A typical exotic party at Murano



A Dale Chihuly piece in the lobby

Working With the Library

When we arrived at Murano there was a tiny and very dark room on the ground floor with piles of books squeezed into tiny bookcases or lying in piles on the floor. This was the Murano “library”. A dedicated team led by Lois Steinberg had been trying for years to find a better location. All members of the team agreed that the ideal location would be in the beautiful 24th floor lounge with its magnificent views and wonderful light. Unfortunately, the only possible location was occupied by a golf simulator which no-one used. Working with Lois and the team, Elizabeth made it her mission to have the library moved to the 24th floor and to make it fully functional. She developed a good working relationship with the General Manager, and they finally worked out a plan whereby the golf simulator would be stored away until a more suitable location could be found. Murano also generously provided funds to purchase bookshelves and other equipment as well as a monthly allowance for purchasing new books.

Cooperating with the people who had been working for years to keep the library afloat, she helped build up a very active and dedicated Library Committee. By the time her declining health led her to pass over the reins, the library was fully functional, widely used and greatly appreciated by many residents. It is also one of the places that Murano proudly shows to prospective new residents.

* The Committee is now led by Nora Smith and Claudia Anderson.



The beautiful library on the top floor



The library reading nook, with a view of the Seattle skyline

The Art Group

Since moving to Murano, Elizabeth worked closely with Marilyn Bergstrom, assisting her in developing the Art Group. Marilyn Bergstrom had always been the driving force behind the Art Group, and Elizabeth found it very rewarding to assist her in developing the program by formalizing the group, attracting teachers, and obtaining funding from Murano.

Between Fall 2024 and Summer 2026, the Art Group organized some 10 or more classes ranging from abstract art and design to gelliplate printing, collage, and wire sculpture, among others. Along the way they managed to create a “core” group of a dozen or so gifted and committed art enthusiasts, now led by Marilyn and Kim Campbell.



The Murano art room

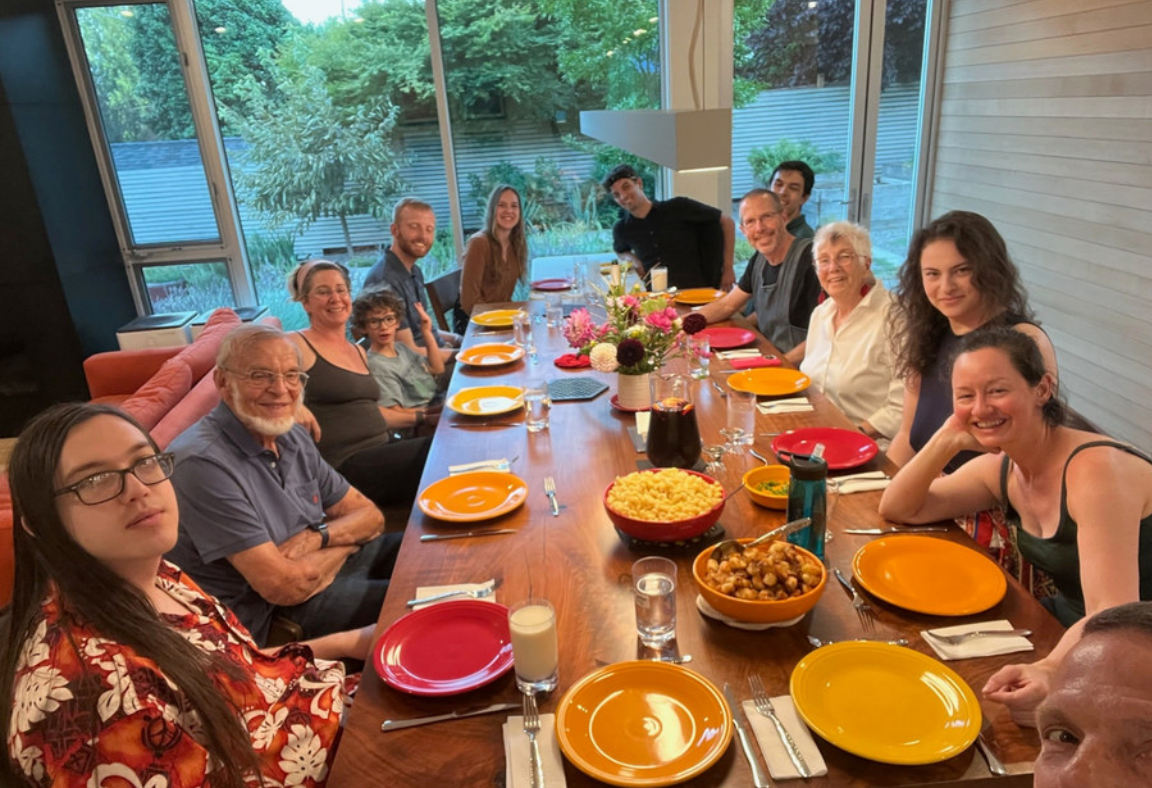


Resident art projects

Life in Seattle

We began to explore Seattle on foot and became fans of the Rapid Ride bus system. Seattle is an interesting and attractive city with all of its lakes and waterfront, but it is difficult to orient yourself because there is water on so many sides. We discovered the lively theater scene and found a number of favorite restaurants. We were particularly pleased that we were able to invite Marcus and Alex to join us at the Seattle Rep, as they had little experience with theaters, and they both seemed to enjoy both the plays and the suppers together to discuss the plays. They were also pleased to discover that Murano has a bistro offering 20 flavors of ice cream.

A highlight of each week was the Sunday brunch with Matt's side of the family. Often one or more of the Oregon-based family would also manage to attend. Matt and Juliana had designed and overseen the construction of their house, which included a very large kitchen where several people could all work on food preparation and cooking, and each member of the family (except us) had an assigned cooking task. The conversations over brunch were fascinating as the younger generations inhabit a completely different world in terms of the movies they watch, the board games they play, and their knowledge of AI and new computer technologies.



Sunday family brunch at Matt and Juliana's



Martin, Mike, Elizabeth, and Heidi at the Nordic Museum

Expeditions

In early 2025 we went on an interesting cultural tour of Mexico City with Road Scholars. The history, architecture and art are all overwhelming. We are both fans of Mexican women surrealist artists, as well as Diego Rivera and the muralists and modern Mexican artists, so we had a real intellectual feast. It was great to get back into Latin American cuisine and culture.

Several times we were invited to join Matt and Juliana for a week in Mazama, a popular vacation area in the Methow Valley in Eastern Washington. This was always a highlight because mountains, flowers and trees were something that Elizabeth missed living in the center of Seattle.

We also flew several times to Bend, where Martin took us on tours of the gorgeous mountains and riverside walks. We met members of the different running, biking, and winter sports groups to which Martin and Heidi belonged. The Bend region is incredibly beautiful.

We also took advantage of the ferry service which allows you to get to know Puget Sound and the surrounding islands. One memorable ferry trip took us to Victoria, British Columbia, where we stayed for a few days.



Elizabeth, Mike, and Matt hiking in the Methow Valley



The guide for our Mexico City tour, 2025

Elizabeth and Mike's Art Show

Elizabeth and Mike were invited to organize a joint art show at Murano to showcase Elizabeth's fabric art and Mike's sculptures. This was our first opportunity to reflect on how, through fabric art (Elizabeth) and sculpture (Mike) we had been able to express common themes from our shared life experiences, and it was a challenging, but extremely satisfying culmination of our art making.

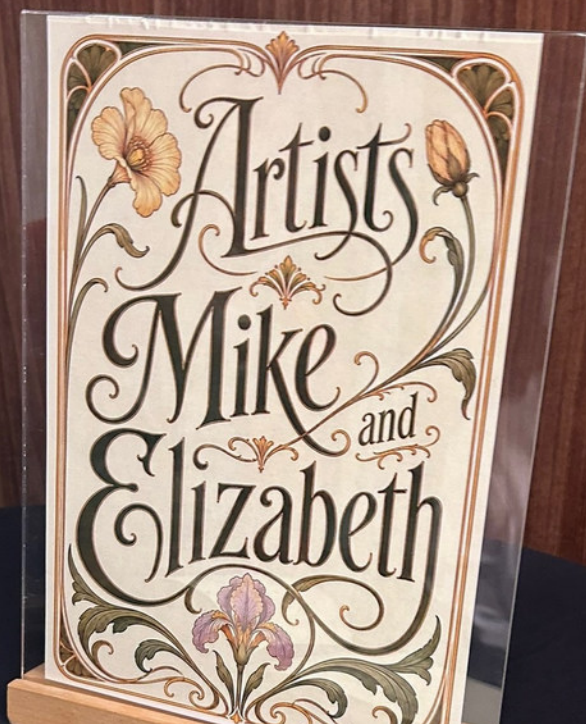
We selected the title: *Journeys: Reflections from a life of travel*. Elizabeth wrote:

For over 65 years, our lives have been shaped by a shared passion for travel - covering Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Living in Venezuela and El Salvador, and working in community development, gave us a deeper understanding of cultures, and daily life beyond the lens of tourism. This exhibition reflects both the beauty of these places and the challenges low-income communities face, highlighting the resilience and community support networks we have witnessed around the world.

Working in different mediums, we bring distinct yet complementary perspectives informed by our shared backgrounds in sociology. Our work explores themes of community, environment and social change.



Elizabeth and Mike at the opening of their joint art show, 2026



The Art Show continued

We each included 10 of our works which were organized around three themes: Climate change, Voyaging through space and time, and Community support networks.

Elizabeth's explanation of "My kind of town" captures her perspective on traditional communities and small towns and how they contrast with large cities:

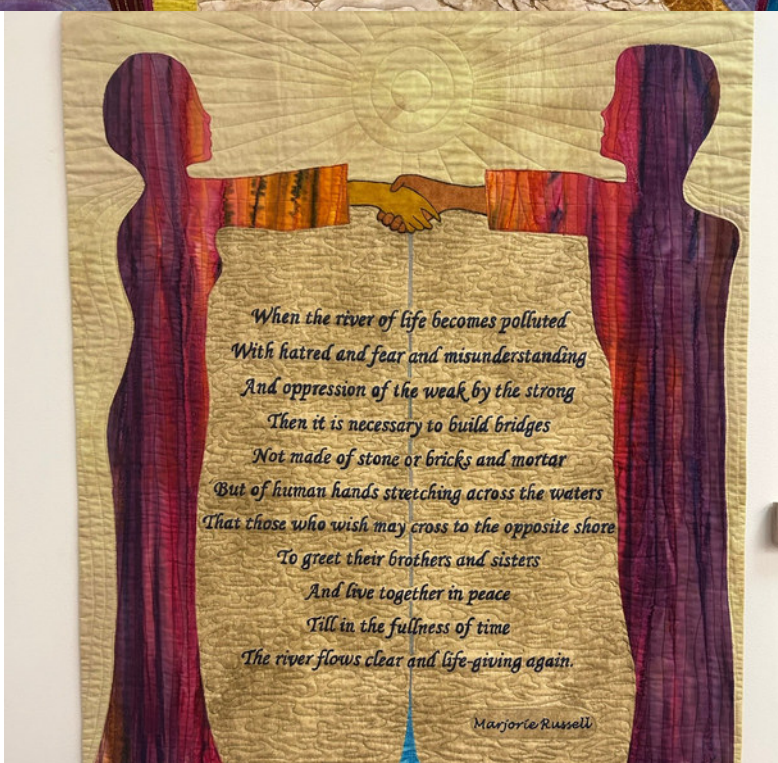
This work incorporates elements from many traditional towns and villages we have enjoyed visiting in widely different parts of the world. Perhaps the curving lines and vivid colors of adobe houses built of natural materials that will dissolve back into the earth over time, the cobbled streets, the steep and wandering staircases that connect them, and the jumbled informal settlements that appear on hilly and unincorporated land, create a more harmonious habitat and closer human connections between people than large modern cities.

A video about the show is available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obxCtWOMYd0>



“My Kind of Town” quilt



“Bridges”, based on a poem by Elizabeth’s mother Marjorie

The end of a long journey

Elizabeth left us on September 8. She felt her time had come and she died peacefully, surrounded by family and with no regrets of things she had not done or places she had not visited. She was able to say her individual farewells to each member of the family.

We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and gratitude from so many people at Murano, both residents and staff, whose lives she had touched. A few impressions from the messages we received:

“Elizabeth was one of the Murano favorites - cheerful, talented, wise, and witty”

“She always seemed delighted by a chance encounter, enlivened by a challenge, and both peaceful and positive about the journey she was on.”

“How fully Elizabeth lived her life and shared her extraordinary gifts with people all over the world.”

“She was always so pleasant and interested in our well-being when we would meet. Her courage was remarkable, and her ability to care for others extraordinary.”

Testimonials

We received many heartwarming testimonials from family and friends whose lives were touched by Elizabeth.

A guide to Elizabeth's family

Elizabeth's parents were Marjorie and Charles Russell. She had two brothers: an elder brother John, and a younger brother Laurie. John had 5 children and Laurie had 4.

Mike's parents were Judith and Frederick Bamberger. Mike had a younger sister Judith who had four children.

Elizabeth and Mike had two sons: Matthew (who lives in Seattle) and Martin (who lives in Bend). Matthew and Martin both had two sons: Marcus and Alex, and Josh and Noah.

Rosemarie Park

ELIZABETH'S FRIEND SINCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Elizabeth and I met when we were 10 at Selsdon Elementary School. By the time we reached high school we were inseparable friends. We supported each other all through those difficult teen and adolescent years. We scrupulously avoided the dreaded sports requirements, survived the draconian headmistress Miss Simpson, and established ourselves as part of the somewhat difficult, intellectually bright class of girls who were a permanent pain to the headmistress who ruled with an iron hand.

We took our first solo trip together at 15, Youth Hosteling to Winchester walking all the way. It became apparent Elizabeth had a way with stray animals. All through our long hikes, later joined by our friend Susan completing the trio, some bedraggled stray would attach itself to Elizabeth. Throughout our friendship at home or abroad some unfortunate stray would be taken in.

We became part of each other's households. Elizabeth's kindness and generosity are fondly remembered by my sister. It was Elizabeth who explained to her that although her big sister was going to teachers' college not University, she should not be deterred and should apply. My failure to learn Latin meant I couldn't get into a university in England. She really made a huge difference in my sister's life who went on to be a university professor. She says Elizabeth really made a difference to her life.

Elizabeth and I wanted so much to travel. After high school we got summer jobs as waitresses at a holiday camp on the coast to earn enough for a trip. This was where she met Michael. Good things to come from what was otherwise a first experience of the somewhat bizarre holiday camp culture.

Elizabeth and I took our first trips abroad together, Italy and Paris where I joined her as she took University lectures there as part of her degree. We shared a passion for bookshops, museums, and art galleries which continued lifelong throughout our friendship.

After Mike and Elizabeth married, our lives took different paths. Elizabeth and Michael went to Venezuela with Action in Venezuela. Long letters kept our connection going. After I married, I moved to Boston and went back to academia finishing several degrees. Elizabeth and Micheal also moved to the US to work for the World Bank. Elizabeth and I explored Washington, DC. We visited bookshops, museums, art galleries, and went on long walks. This continued in Portland where Elizabeth and Mikes' house become a home from home. The house was filled with wonderful art works – Mike's sculptures, painting and so much more. Elizabeth's wonderful quilt work opened this entirely new art world. She made me more open to new elements of modern art.

More than anything, Elizabeth's kindness, her generosity and her gift of friendship and empathy, her emotional support and understanding in good times and bad, have

made a difference in my life and in that of others. Her common sense and practicality made her someone who through thick and thin I could turn to. The close bond we formed starting at age 10 held throughout our lives. Mike, Matthew and Martin were my family at a distance. Her friendship provided a bond that has lasted a lifetime.

Susan Budd

ELIZABETH'S FRIEND SINCE HIGH SCHOOL

I met Elizabeth when we came back to England from Jamaica and after some delay, I was sent to a new school - It must have been about 1954. It was a turbulent and difficult time for my family, and I didn't like the English or the school.

In retrospect, meeting Elizabeth was the best thing that happened to me around then. She was a clever, witty, cheerful girl, very much at home, or so it seemed, in Coulsdon, a suburb on the southern edge of London. I liked her immediately, and came to know and like her mother, a lively and irreverent person, usually with a cigarette in her hand. I remember a lot of trying to dodge games, dealing with the awful food, gossiping about the teachers, sitting laughing on the grass talking about books we had read or radio programmes we had heard. I am proud that it was I, not the school, who told her that she could get a scholarship to university and everything would be paid for; tuition, living expenses, even the fare home. And in due course she went to Leicester to read French, the first member of her family to go to university.

We went on knowing each other after we had left school because she had met Mike, who was a postgraduate student at the London School of Economics, where I had gone for my first degree. We kept in touch – mostly by letter, she was a terrific letter-writer – and then later, when

I visited the States or she came to England, we met up in various places and ended going on little trips together. We were both interested in quilting, and went to the National quilt show in Birmingham and to a quilter's weekend in Sisters, Oregon. By this time, she and Mike had travelled and worked in a dazzling series of places, and she had learnt a great deal about people's and especially women's lives.

She was a good daughter, and used to come back to England most years to see her mother and her family. She would get in touch with me and we would usually manage to meet and talk about how our lives, children, and countries were doing. She had great empathy and good sense, and a sort of natural authority which came from her wide experience of how human lives are lived. I always loved talking to her, and to Mike, and although we didn't meet all that often she was a great friend, from whom I learnt a lot. I am very very sad that her life is to be cut short.

Julie

ELIZABETH'S NIECE

Elizabeth, I wish we could have seen each other more and had more time..... there is never enough time!

I always loved receiving the letter in the post at Christmas time with all the family news and updates. You all seemed to cram so much in and I loved hearing all about your travels and what adventures you were up to next.

My fondest memories are when you visited and we'd meet up at Nan and Grandads, and you taught us snap grab! Wow! What a vicious game that could turn into and I never knew you were so competitive until then.

They were the best times, when all the family would meet and we'd play games and catch up and listen to each other's stories and daily life's. Time all together.

Though there has always been the distance in miles between us you are never far from my thoughts and they are treasured memories that will last a lifetime.

Thank you for always being you. xx

Paul

ELIZABETH'S NEPHEW

I always remember Elizabeth to be a courteous lady, that is until we played "Snap Grab", then the gloves were off.

Irrespective of age or gender, there were no holds barred, her grip became stronger than a Silverback gorilla, a snarl more menacing than a lioness and reflexes quicker than a cat... She was in there gripping, grappling, tearing and yanking at those cards...and I may add, with a gleeful look when she had a big handful of torn, tattered and severely misshaped cards, often followed by a shocked and horrified Nana Russell (Elizabeth's Mother)... "Elizabeth!". This just seemed to egg Elizabeth on.. "Oh mum, it's fine... It's just a game! ", but we all know snap grab was more than a game, it was a chance to stamp your dominance, it was a show of your power and speed.

The following day coming down to breakfast, hands sore and battle scared from hanging onto cards while being flung from left to right from the savage attack from our aunt. Sitting at the breakfast table and Elizabeth asking Matthew and Martin if they've had their orange juice. It was at this point we knew Elizabeth was back to her calm and collective manner.... That is until the next game of Snap Grab the following evening.

It wasn't until us kids reached the age of 11 or so that we started to show our dominance and this is when the real battles began...

Penny

ELIZABETH'S NIECE

I was just thinking back to my trip to America with Jackie in May 1991, when we stayed with you and Mike in Washington D.C. I feel so blessed that I was able to spend that time with you all.

I fondly remember cooking dinner with you, Elizabeth, and exchanging recipes. Even though mine were often improvised, you always listened and watched with interest. I also loved going to the big American supermarkets; I know my excitement over the peanut butter machine used to make you chuckle!

Every evening, we would all sit and talk for hours, never running out of things to talk about. Mike showed us his sculptures that he was working on, and I was always fascinated at the size and detail of them and that his imagination knew no bounds.

For my 19th Birthday you both took me and Jackie to a murder mystery show at the Theatre, which had audience interaction. It was so much fun and sparked my interest in going to the Theatre, which I still have to this day.

During our stay, Matthew and Martin travelled over and it was so much fun to spend time with them catching up on life and laughing about all the mischief and adventures we

all used to get up to at Nan's house and at Box hill in our younger days.

Elizabeth drove us to a historic house during our trip, and I remember the house vaguely, but my main memory is about how much it rained and how soaked through to the skin we all were and having no choice but to have our picnic in the car. Despite the weather it was a day filled with so much fun and laughter; I would do it again in a heartbeat.

I feel so blessed that I was able to spend this time with you all.

Shaun

ELIZABETH'S NEPHEW

I have such wonderful memories when you were over from America and we would meet and stay at Nan and granddads

Many great times like when the piñata was hung on the washing line and we all tried our hardest, whacking away till the sweet dropped out. The never ending times we all apple pied the beds, I am sure to the dismay of the adults!

Treasured childhood times that will always be remembered

Sending you my love

Andy

ELIZABETH'S NEPHEW

A Rhyming Poem for Aunt Elizabeth

When I think back on younger days,
Your kindness shines in steady ways.
My siblings travelled off with you,
On holidays I never knew.
They'd return with tales so bright,
Of laughter, fun, and sheer delight.

But you still reached me from afar,
Across the sea, across the stars —
National Geographic in the post,
Stories I treasured more than most.
Red Indians, wild and fierce and free,
You always knew what'd speak to me.

And in Nan's house, late '80s glow,
There's still a place my heart will go —
To Snap Grab rounds, both sharp and fast,
Where your quick hands would always last.
We'd laugh so hard the room would shake,
Those memories no time can take.

You gave so much — not just in gold,
But in your heart, so warm and bold.

You'd listen, guide, and understand,
Offering wisdom close at hand.
Each year you kept our threads in line,
Updates written, loving, fine.

Life carried me up north one day,
And miles grew long along the way.
But when you travelled back to see
The family, you meant the world to me.
The times were short, the love was long —
In every memory, still so strong.

Like Nan before, I love a rhyme,
So it feels fitting at this time
To say thank you, Aunt Elizabeth,
For love that lingers past each breath.
For all you've done, and all you've been,
And the family strength you built within.

Karen

ELIZABETH'S NIECE

Dear Elizabeth,

I have such fond memories of when you used to come back to England. I loved listening to your childhood memories and travel stories.

While you were living in Venezuela, you brought a beautiful, colourful piñata filled with lovely handmade wooden gifts. It was such fun trying to smash the donkey to pieces; I caught a beautiful wooden carved jewellery box which I adored.

I also remember being told off for fighting with the boys (especially Martin!). I'm sure I tested your patience more than once. But you were always so kind and fair with me, and I never forgot that.

I was also so lucky to receive a National Geographic magazine each month that you sent to me. I used to look forward to it dropping through the letterbox with such excitement.

I'll always remember when you visited us in Torquay when Mason and Ellisha were little. I was tired and feeling a bit overwhelmed, and you took the time to sit and talk with me. You were so caring and understanding, the tips and advice you gave me really helped.

Thank you for being such a wonderful Aunt. Even with the distance between us, I've always felt close to you.

Sending you all my love,

Karen xxxx

Mishi

ELIZABETH'S NIECE

Poem for Elizabeth

In every Christmas letter that you'd send,
You gathered us from end to end.
A year of life in every line,
In words so warm, so full of time.

At Christmas, pages bright with care,
Of all the love you chose to share.
A window into days gone by,
A gentle thread that stayed nearby.

Nan's face would light when you were near,
Or when your name was spoken clear.
So proud of you, so plain to see,
Now held in memory tenderly.

And at her farewell, bright and true,
The colours worn spoke loud of you.
A vibrant spirit, bold and kind,
A warmth that lingers in the mind.

I still remember Dad on the phone,
When calls cost more than we had known,
Rushing his words, so fast, so keen,
To fit in all that might have been.

The laughter, news, the love so clear,
All poured out quickly just to hear.

You are held close in all we do,
In every memory shaped by you.
And though words feel small to say goodbye,
Your light will never pass us by.

Judith

MIKE'S SISTER

I was only about 12 or 13 when I first met Elizabeth and I was mightily impressed. She appeared so trendy, with her short dark shiny hair - a bit like a pop idol.

Following her wedding to my brother Michael in 1976, relocation to central America, and the birth of her two boys, I have a vivid memory of Elizabeth during a trip to the UK hanging out dozens and dozens of nappies on the washing line at Brentwood when Matthew and Martin were tiny. Each visit at whatever time of year inevitably involved picnics on the beach at Shoebury, often in less-than-ideal weather conditions. Grandma Judith was determined to give Matthew and Martin '*nice rosy cheeks*' from the bracing sea air, but I think any rosiness was caused by the rapid chattering of their teeth while they stood shivering in their swimming trunks at the water's edge egged on by Elizabeth wearing a thick coat and scarf!

There was a great deal of hole digging I remember, with Elizabeth urging the boys not to dig such deep holes, whereby they promptly buried each other up to the neck in sand. It would never be allowed under health and safety regulations these days but back then well... it was a different world.

I've also many happy memories of going over to Coulsdon and enjoying all the 'banquets' with Marjorie, Charles and

Elizabeth's brothers; and then as time went by with the ever-expanding younger generation.

Although I was never introduced to 'snap grab,' Elizabeth's less than genteel streak was certainly revealed when a piñata appeared at Martin's 9th birthday party. With warlike cries Elizabeth charged forth and demonstrated how to 'Slay it!' - much to the excitement of all the nieces and nephews in attendance! Surely not the behaviour expected from an esteemed aunt who should have been acting as an exemplary role model to the younger generation!

The wonderful meals Elizabeth created feature in many of my memories, with her chocolate cookies being legendary and starring strongly in the memories of the next generation as well. She certainly didn't starve us during our trip to the states with Andrew and Helen in 1995 and Elizabeth even organised for us to stay with Mike and Judy Mehrer who also fed us mightily well.

I've spent many a happy hour discussing books with Elizabeth and once, when my visit coincided with a book club meeting, I was delighted to attend. I recall that the book we discussed at that meeting was *The White Tiger*, but what really stayed in my memory was the food! A table full to bursting with delicious delicacies. No wonder the meeting lasted such a long time!

I loved seeing Elizabeth's carefully organised fabrics with matching threads and notions when we visited your home

in Oregon and was green with envy at the thought of an entire room devoted to craft! My memories of quilts as a child were of those made by Grandma Douglass from repurposed fabrics and lovingly stitched by hand.

Elizabeth's quilts were not a bit like that; they were works of art with a massive 'Wow' factor. I was bowled over when Elizabeth hefted one across the pond for me. How I treasure that beautiful Morning Garden design quilt that Elizabeth made in Beaverton in June 2008. It now has pride of place in my yellow bedroom and for me it conjures up warmth, brightness and happiness even on the dullest of days. Judith

Andrew

ELIZABETH'S NEPHEW

Elizabeth is a great storyteller - most of my memories are from her stories. So many from Venezuela, via my parents, long before I was born, and her many experiences in the US. I'm particularly fond of how her Spanish came from "the streets" of Latin America. It often makes me chuckle whenever I'm failing at speaking Spanish!

I remember clearly that it was only when mum, dad, Helen and I were staying with you in Bethesda when I was about 12, that I realised that Elizabeth wasn't actually American! Everything written down had American spellings and when I heard a word pronounced "yo-gurt" I remember thinking "what's that?!" I asked mum and she explained that this is what happened when you move away - still stands out to me today!

Also on that trip, Helen and I were making loads of noise chatting away in your basement as we were wide awake from jet lag and clearly, we woke Elizabeth up. Instead of telling us to shut up (*in hindsight what I would have done!*) she came and offered us amazing cookies and other snacks. As a kid - that's the best!!! Elizabeth is a great host and despite bringing chaos to her home, she never seems phased and is always so welcoming.

Fast forward to me being a grown up, Elizabeth and Mike came to visit Laura and me in London. We drove them

back to Southend and during the drive Laura had to take a call from a parishioner. Elizabeth was super interested in Laura's role as a priest, and it sparked some great conversation - Elizabeth is always authentically interested in everyone around her. Andrew

Daniel

ELIZABETH'S NEPHEW

I obviously can't remember my Christening Day on 7th August 1977, but I know that Aunt Elizabeth agreed to be my Godmother and did a sterling job through the years attempting to keep me on the straight and narrow. The bits I do remember, that may or may not be related to being a Godmother, were the 'crisp notes' that appeared each time Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle Michael came to visit!

So many visits over the years with memories of all day picnics on the beach and 'eating out' at The Shore House. I'm sure we did other things but that's what stands out in my mind.

One of my most vivid memories is my trip with my 'sensible' friend James Lancaster, to see you in the states when I was sixteen. We must have been there on 4th July because there were fireworks and all sorts of celebrations going on, and the best bit was that Aunt Elizabeth let us two boys go out on our own to join in with all the fun. I'm sure you took us on 'educational' trips while we were there and gave us a flavour of life in the USA, but unfortunately those memories have faded over time.

I'm so pleased that since 2012 when we moved into our 'Des Res' by the sea, Dagmara and I have been able to host a number of BBQ's in our garden when you visited and as I recall, we have even laid on beautiful weather. A very

small thank-you in return for all the lovely experiences
you provided for me when I was growing up.Daniel.

Vernon

ELIZABETH'S NEPHEW

When I think of you, Elisabeth, it's memories of warmth, kindness, and ready laughter. Even though we were separated by geography, recollections from my childhood are peppered with you, Mike, Martin and Matthew. Your Amazing Aunt status was set in stone on the occasion you guys visited during term time - Daniel and I were allowed to skip school for the day, and you took us to the beach!

I remember as if yesterday when you and Mike welcomed Stefan, my German buddy, and me into your home in Washington DC. Two wide-eyed 16-year-olds on our first trip to the USA. You choreographed everything perfectly to ensure it truly was an amazing experience. I don't know how you managed to cram so much in, but I'm left with a kaleidoscope of wonderful memories; multiple Smithsonian visits – the Native American Art Museum being a standout – Boston, the cherry blossoms in bloom, Lincoln memorial, a basketball game, the Vietnam War memorial, the Whitehouse, and so much more.

Another 14 years went by, and you and Mike welcomed Kirsten and me into your home in Portland. Yet again, another trove of amazing memories. Overwhelmingly, my experience of spending that time with you is your passion for the beauty of the natural world, whether that be your garden or the endless forests of Oregon in the fall. That passion so enthusiastically shared, not only in words, but in your love of art and the crafts you create.

Kirsten

VERNON'S WIFE

Our stay with you and Mike when we were newly married was a gift that we have often come back to over the years. You welcomed us so warmly and shared not only your home, but your love of life and the area you had chosen to live in. Whether chatting in your kitchen while you cooked another delicious meal or at the wild coastline of Cannon Beach, it was an insight into a life being lived well and full of adventure. You embraced me into your family so easily and looked after me so kindly when I was unwell that time, thank you.

With much love, Kirsten xxx

Helen

ELIZABETH'S NIECE

I have such lovely memories of coming to America to visit in 1995, just before I turned 11. I can still picture being greeted at the door by you with a plate of brownies.

Whether that's exactly how it happened or my mind has reshaped it over time, I'm not entirely sure - but I like to believe it's true, because it makes me smile every time I think of it.

I loved it when you came to the UK to visit because you always treated us to a meal out and there was invariably some extra pocket money when you waved goodbye.

(Obviously that's not the only reason we enjoyed your visits!)

After Daniel moved to his seafront abode in 2012, our big family gatherings tended to be in his back garden, and it was there in 2023 that my twins got to meet you and Mike. It meant a great deal to me that my aunt and uncle met their great niece and nephew, albeit briefly.

Whenever and wherever we've met, I've been so interested to hear about your travels and adventures and more recently, I've loved seeing you embrace Facebook and use it to share your beautiful quilts. Watching you showcase your creativity has been inspiring and has encouraged me in my own crafting hobbies. It's been such a joy to see that part of you, even from afar.

Please know how fondly you are thought of, and how grateful I am to carry these memories with me. Helen.

Martin

ELIZABETH'S SON

When you look back on 84 years of someone's life, it is nearly impossible to capture all the things that made them special and amazing. What stands out most to me about Mom is her ability to pull people together to build a community or a family, with the line between them being blurry.

When we lived in El Salvador I remember her in a pantomime for the British club dressed up as a bad guy plotting to blow up something, and I remember the joyful feeling of being a part of such a community. Our birthday parties, even though we didn't have a lot of resources, were always a blast as we held relay races where the kids dressed in adult clothes and raced up and down the garden, cakes were homemade, games were made up and used whatever we had around - we never wanted for fun and love and our friends loved them.

As we grew older Mom was always at the center of get togethers, whether with family in England, our friends from school, Mom and Dad's work, our later on as Matt and I started families of our own. I don't remember a time before making and eating Christmas pudding or mince pies, all the holiday traditions, or everyday things like almost always sitting down to breakfast and dinner together. All these things built the foundation for our family, with Thanksgiving and summer family get-

togethers as key times when we all looked forward to having our families together.

Every place we lived, whether for a few years or many, Mom made them all feel like home, a safe and loving place, not only for our immediate family, but also extended family and countless friends who came to stay. It goes without saying that when guests came to stay, Matt and I gave up our bedrooms and took sleeping bags to the basement!

One of Mom's super powers is getting people to get things done and get organized - she could be tough but was always kind and fair (with the exception of a couple of times I got into trouble.....through no fault of my own).

It has been great to see my boys and their cousins grow up under Mom's loving and wonderful influence, and to look back and see how she helped form me into the person I am today

Noah

ELIZABETH'S GRANDSON

One time, when I was little, I caught a cold and stayed home from school. My Mom and Dad were at work, so I spent the day with Nana. Once I got out of bed, she insisted that I eat something to help me feel better. I remember she made toast with raspberry jam which she cut into strips and dubbed royal guards. It was silly, and the whimsy of it made me smile. We spent the rest of the day playing board games, pick up sticks, quilting, and watching Oregon Art Beat. It's one of my fondest memories with her. She's a wonderful Nana - she brings whimsy and fun to life, teaches me things, and shares so much love.

Josh

ELIZABETH'S GRANDSON

How lucky am I to have grown up with Nana.

I don't remember a time before Nana and Grandad moved to Beaverton. Perhaps my earliest memory with Nana and Grandad is peering out the back window of their new house as big excavators and machines tore up the backyard pool to make room for Nana's far more fitting garden. Over the next 15 years, Nana was often out in the garden, tending to plants of every variety, supervising us splashing around in the fountain and pool in the back patio, and trying in vain to convince us cousins not to careen around the concrete walkway too fast on our plastic trike.

A few years after the deconstruction of the pool, we moved in across the street from Nana and Grandad. I didn't realize how lucky we were to have our Nana and Grandad just across the street, but I do remember how excited I would be to go over to their house. Whether it was time to go over for the weekly sleepover, or if we were just going over for the evening, I'd always love to go over to our second home. Our excitement was second only to that of Chester and Scruffy when we'd utter the words "time to go to Nana and Grandad's!". They'd start vibrating with energy and wagging all over the place. Then, we'd all open the front door, and Noah, the dogs, and I would all go hurtling down the hill to their house, barely stopping to

look for cars, and miraculously never cutting up our bare feet as we ran across the streets.

We'd race around the front of the garage, onto the front porch, and open the unlocked front door with a "Hellooooo". That would be returned with another "Helloooo" as Nana welcomed us into the house. Of course, the first place we'd all converge was the pantry. The dogs had Nana wrapped around their little dog fingers and could always count on a "Biccky"(or two) as they came in the door. Then, Noah and I would raid the pantry. Over the years, we'd go through a variety of different snack fixations, but one of the most prominent for me was three packets of cold instant oatmeal and milk. Then, we'd sit down at the table and tell Nana and Grandad about our day at school, our soccer game, or whatever else was going on. Nana would always warn us not to ruin our appetite for weekly selected dinner which was usually an hour or two later. I can only imagine that Nana and Grandad were incredibly sick of our most requested meals of breaded chicken and burritos after we stopped doing sleepovers.

After snack time, we'd get up to all sorts of things. Sometimes we'd play pickup sticks, or the dreaded scrabble, but I also remember Nana trying her best to make sure us engineering prone grandchildren kept some artistic bones in our bodies. We'd do fuse beads, painting, and a little bit of quilting. Nana was always puttering in her quilting studio. She'd be working on laying out her next project on the foam board, quilting up something in

progress, or playing with different fiber art techniques which became decreasingly traditional and increasingly creative over the years. In particular, as I got into hiking in high school, I remember Nana asking me to keep an eye out for anything particularly rusty for her to use in her quilting pursuits.

Nana and I did complete one quilt together. There were a few very strictly enforced rules. First, the fabric scissors were not to be used on anything except fabric. Paper.... don't even think about it. I will admit that I do not understand to this day how paper is likely to dull sharp metal scissors, but if and when I have fabric scissors of my own, they will only touch fabric. Second, you were not to look at, think about, or otherwise acknowledge the existence of the rotary cutter. That might be slight hyperbole, but while some kids grew up with the fear of god instilled in them, we grew up with the fear of the rotary cutter. Assurances were made that using the rotary cutter was a sure way to sever digits, or worse. We did however complete the striped quilt which is now centrally featured as the divider between the front and back of my van.

As we grew up, Nana encouraged us in everything that we did, but would always tell us when something was not quite proper. Whether it was not wearing a coat in the winter, skipping class to run errands for the robotics team, or moving into my van in a driveway, I'd always get an "Oh! Josh...", followed by love and support even though I didn't have the good sense to put on a jacket.

While many of my friends would see their grandparents once or twice a year, I have made more memories with Nana than I could possibly fit here, but here are a small sampling of other fond memories I have from growing up with Nana:

1. Cramming into the rear facing seats of the “Greenie Meanie” ford taurus after having Mexican food at Si Señor.
2. Nana taking us four cousins to run amuck during holidays at Safari Sam’s or sky high trampoline park(against the better judgement of medical professionals)
3. Nana trying to keep me from passing out on the white leather couches of the living room during my pre-dinner nap, or trying to keep me from falling asleep on the couch after dinner.
4. Watching Oregon Art Beat and Oregon Field Guide every Thursday after dinner.
5. Nana reading us the “Noddy” books before tucking us in for bed.
6. My friends meeting Nana and Grandad and informing me that they do in fact have a British accent. They just always sounded like Nana and Grandad to me.
7. Nana leading the Christmas pudding charge and getting real suet, all sorts of booze, and raisin like things galore.
8. Going to Hawaii for my eleven year old trip and enjoying playing in an actually warm ocean and

stuffing myself with the all you can eat breakfast with Nana and Grandad.

9. Coming and sitting out on the porch on Elm avenue for tea during COVID to catch up with Nana and Grandad.

Not only did I create all of these wonderful memories with Nana, but she is also an example for me of someone who lived life to the fullest and found depth and meaning in so many aspects of life. Nana is an amazing artist, has a doctorate, is loyal to her friends, is a world traveler, is someone who cares deeply about those around her, a scrabble whiz, is the matriarch of an incredibly loving family, and played a huge role in helping me to become who I am.

Man, how lucky am I to have all of those memories and to have had my Nana growing up.

Matt

SON

When we first told Mom that she was going to be a grandparent, she promptly announced that like all the women before her in her family, she would be known as Nana. And from that day onward, she has always been Nana to me.

She was a person of many interests: gardening, quilting, art, social and political causes, and more. But first and foremost, she cared most deeply about family. For three decades, Nana was the matriarch and the heart of our family, and my fondest memories of her are surrounded by the family she raised and cared for so deeply.

Nana and Grandad's house in Beaverton was home base for our family for twenty years. Alex, Josh, Marcus, and Noah were regulars throughout their childhoods, and the house was always evolving as they grew up. The upstairs hallway was variously a tricycle racecourse, a sock skating rink, and a bowling alley until the boys grew large enough to be sent outside for their more rambunctious endeavors. The back yard held sandboxes, forts, and ball games (and occasionally quiet spaces for grownups to chat and enjoy the sunshine).

Holidays and vacations were always a big deal: we'd gather at Nana and Grandad's house every year for Thanksgiving, and in the summer at Cannon Beach or Sunriver. Nana

was always at the center of the festivities—organizing, cooking, and taking care of the whole family. Food was, of course, a big part of every get-together. Turkey, and Nana’s famous sausage meat stuffing, and most of all the infamous Christmas pudding.

Every year at Thanksgiving, Nana would gather the ingredients: nuts, dried fruit, and suet (don’t ask). Everyone had a job: some people would chop, and some would measure, and everyone would take a turn mixing. At the end, everyone would close their eyes, taste the pudding, and make a wish. Some people enjoyed eating the finished pudding and some didn’t, but everyone was part of the ritual of making it.

Time passed, and roles shifted. Thanksgiving was more frequently held in Seattle, and other people stepped up to do more of the cooking. The grandchildren enthusiastically took over the vital job of making the sausage meat stuffing. But always, Nana was at the center of it: supervising, chatting, and offering love and support to everyone in our growing family.

Eventually Nana and Grandad downsized to an apartment. Our house in Seattle became the new family hub, and our generation fully took over the role of organizing and coordinating the family. The details and traditions change with time, but it remains the family that Nana raised and loved.

Juliana

MATT'S PARTNER

I met Elizabeth at Thanksgiving in 2015, at her and Mike's house in Beaverton. I was the newest member of the family and still figuring out how I fit in. From the start, it was clear that Elizabeth ran the show. She had planned all of the meals, done a good deal of the cooking ahead of time, and was constantly checking in on how people were doing, to the point of almost hovering. That was when I was first introduced to Christmas pudding, a lovely family tradition and, from my non-British perspective, a somewhat horrifying thing to eat. But I was included in the tradition just like everyone else, and got a spoon to stir the mixture, take a taste, and make a wish. It was a warm welcome into the Bambergers' lives.

Elizabeth was also protective of her family, and especially of her grandchildren. It wasn't until she saw how much I cared for my stepsons, and how much they liked me, that she really accepted me.

As she and Mike aged, she started handing the reins to her sons. Matt and Martin took over the Thanksgiving meal planning and much of the cooking. They both inherited a strong caretaking streak from Elizabeth. She was clearly pleased with how well they filled in for her, and it was just as clearly hard for her to let go of being the one in charge. She still kept a close eye on everyone's well-being and hadn't yet kicked the hovering habit.

Over time, Matt and I became the hosts of family events, and Elizabeth settled into being the matriarch emeritus, watching the show rather than hovering over it and trying to direct it. While she never stopped offering to help, she did finally become comfortable sitting back and letting someone else bring her and Mike coffee at our Sunday brunches.

She was a model of how to accept aging and still enjoy life, and of how to accept help while still refusing to be a burden. Even as she became more limited, she pursued the things she loved doing, made new friends at Murano, and kept watch over everyone in the family, including me. As I spent more time with her, helping with doctors' appointments and medications, she reminded me often to take care of myself. I think she saw some of herself in me, the next generation caring for everyone. I plan to follow her example and will keep watch over the family, while enjoying life as I do it.

Alex

ELIZABETH'S GRANDSON

Elizabeth has been a wonderful and constant presence throughout our lives, and I am so lucky to have grown up knowing her. When we were younger we would go down to Portland to visit regularly and always ended up staying with Nana in the guest bedroom, right next to her quilting room. We got to see all of her supplies and her beautiful quilts throughout her house and ours. Every visit she would make huge elaborate and delicious meals for us while we were there, my favorite among which was her wonderful recipe for sausage meat stuffing that she made every Thanksgiving. After Thanksgiving she also had us all partake in making a big batch of Christmas Pudding as a fun family ritual, and she always made sure we were well supplied with food for the drives back home. She also on several occasions brought the whole family down to Cannon Beach for day trips down by the shore.

Since moving to Seattle she has continued to be a bright, caring, and cheerful presence through our lives, with her proximity allowing us to see her much more often. She has continued to tell us all sorts of interesting stories and expose us to fun movies that are from before our time when she regularly invites us over to visit. Over the past year she has also been heading Murano's drive to create and maintain a library and brought me in to help with that. It is always wonderful to spend time with her.

Marcus

ELIZABETH'S GRANDSON

Elizabeth introduced us to one of my favorite recipes, sausagemeat stuffing. It's an old family recipe now, even if it did come out of a cookbook at first. She maintained another food tradition as well, the Christmas puddings that we cooked at Thanksgiving and let sit for a month. For all that we poked fun at the flavor, I enjoyed getting together with the whole family for the ritual of making and mixing the pudding. Whenever it was time for us to leave and return home, we left with snacks for the trip back up, whether cookies, sandwiches, or bags of cereal. She brought us together and made sure that we never went hungry.

No matter how messy, complicated, or scary the rest of the world got, Nana was a steady, caring constant. I can't say how much I've appreciated her over the years. Between her many travels and fascinating stories, she's done so much to broaden my horizons. She and Grandad took me to Washington, D.C. on a wonderful trip where we crammed in as many museum visits as we possibly could. I tried out sewing because I'd seen her amazing quilts. I hope that I can continue living life with the good humor, patient determination, and curiosity that she always embodied.

