



Priscilla Richardson Smith

MAY 8, 1933 - OCT 17, 2025



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Prisilla Richardson Smith, 92, of Rehoboth Beach, Del., passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by her children and family dog, Groot, on October 17, 2025. She will be remembered as an avid reader, talented gardener and needlepointer, community and church volunteer, and loving mother and grandmother who cooked delicious family meals.

Born on May 8, 1933, in Dover, Del., Priscilla graduated from Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield, Mass., before attending Mount Vernon College in Washington, D.C. Former Governor Charles Terry set her up with Air Force fighter pilot Jay Smith, and they married in 1954. After numerous moves to support her husband's career, they became full-time Rehoboth residents in 1983, where she launched into community affairs and never stopped.

Few people served the greater Rehoboth Beach area more tirelessly — or humbly — than Priscilla, also known as Prissy to her late husband and grandchildren. In 2000, Rehoboth Beach Main Street presented her with its Community Unity Outstanding Citizen Award, followed by being named the 2002 Delaware Coast Press Person of the Year. The Rehoboth Beach–Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce chose her for the 2004 Mae Hall McCabe Award for Outstanding Community Service, and she was honored with the 2010 Village Improvement Association Citizenship Award.

When pressed about how and why she did so much for the community, she would say, “Ohhh, it’s just something I enjoy.” Something she enjoyed most was ensuring the continual success of the Rehoboth Beach Public Library. She led the Friends of the Library as president from 1993 until 2018, while chairing countless fundraisers, including the beloved Chocolate Festival. She served as secretary of the RB Homeowners’ Association for 18 years, as well as terms as president and treasurer. She honed her gardening skills as a member and officer of the Sussex Gardeners and through her over 20 years of service as chairperson of the RB Park and Shade Tree Commission, where she maintained playgrounds, gazebos, and community gardens.



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The RB Charter Centennial Committee, the Downtown Revitalization Committee on Aesthetics, RB Main Street, Save Our Lakes Alliance, and other groups enjoyed Prissy's expertise and leadership, as did the RB Parks and Recreation Committee. Her commitment extended to her church, All Saints' Episcopal, where she served as senior warden, a vestry member, and led the altar guild for four decades. To further the church's ministry in the community, Priscilla chaired the long-running Rehoboth Christmas Shop fundraiser. Throughout this time, Priscilla dedicated over 24 years as treasurer of the City of Rehoboth Beach.

She was preceded in death by her husband of over 50 years, James Warner Smith (Jay), her parents, Harry Alden Richardson II and Dorothy Millman Richardson, and her sister, Dorothy Richardson Baldwin.

Priscilla is survived by her three children, Curtis Alden Smith (Elaine), Cynthia Smith Speake (Elliotte), and Terry Alden Smith; seven grandchildren, Alden Speake Cayse (Brian), Madeline Alden Smith (Matthew Kane), Molly Alden Smith, Margaret Alden Smith (Jake Hubbard), Beau Alden Smith, Erika Alden Smith (Benedict Maggio), and Christopher Alden Smith; one great-granddaughter, Edith Alden Cayse; and the family dog, Groot.

The family expresses appreciation to her caregivers, Cindy, Wanda, Virginia, Laurie, JoJo, and Wendy.

She'll be missed deeply by her family and the many people who shared her sharp-witted friendship.

A memorial service will be held in December 2025 at All Saints' Church, Rehoboth Beach, Del.; details to come. Inurnment will be private. Memorial gifts may be made to West Side New Beginnings, Inc. in West Rehoboth, Del., or a charity close to your heart.

Please sign the tribute wall at this site.



Tribute Wall

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Karen Rosen posted:

Curt,Cindy and Terry,The wonderful memories of summers spent on Queen St. are too many to count, yet, to this day I can still remember your mom with her iced tea, chair and a book headed to the beach! I never heard her raise her voice or get upset and her dry sense of humor always made me laugh! Your mom and dad were amazing and their friendship with my mom continued long after all of us grew up. Through the sorrow may you find comfort in knowing your mom is at peace.Karen (Kozin)Rosen

October 29 at 12:32 PM



Laurie Purkey posted:

So many memories with my sweet Prissy. Our wonderful times in Rehoboth will stay in my heart forever. Fly high until we meet again ❤️ 🗉 🌟

October 24 at 11:14 PM



Wanda Brand posted:

I met Priscilla 13 months ago, with my dog and granddaughter, Kinnley. I have never felt so welcomed as the first day i walked through her door. She was a world of knowledge and full of stories from over the years. It never felt like going to a job, more like visiting an old friend. The days I cherish the most was a Sat Terry, Groot, and I walked her to the beach and up on the dunes to see the ocean. The following day I drive her to a nursery where we spent 4 hours in all her gardening glory! She was happier than a child at Christmas! I am blessed to have met her and her beautiful family. I will miss you Princess and thank you for being you.

October 24 at 1:34 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Priscilla by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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