



## Melonie Gaye Wigley

Melonie Gaye Wigley, age 74 of Raleigh, passed away at home on the morning of August 10th, 2025. She was born in Kingston upon Thames, just outside of London, on November 20th, 1950 and grew up in the military family of Leon and Irene Cross.

Her first visit to America was the family's posting to Shaw Air Force Base near Sumter, South Carolina. There, she faced the many challenges

of an intelligent young girl with a cockney accent running headlong into the rural south of the mid '50s.

The family's second posting was more harmonious and took Melonie to the Tokyo area, living on and off-base while her father served in the Air Force. She was there during the 1964 Olympics. The post-war Japanese culture made a distinct impact on her and began a life-long love of Japan.

After Japan, Melonie lived with her parents in Havre, Montana, a small town approximately 40 miles from the Canadian border. The family then returned to England for her dad's final posting, where Melonie graduated from a US military school named Bushey Hall in 1968. She often shared fond memories of this time, including a trip with her tennis team to Garmisch in Germany.

After her father's retirement, the family moved to Great Falls, Montana. She began training for a career in nursing and worked part time at the auto shop on base. It was there in September 1970 that she first met Bryan, who was serving as a Minuteman launch officer. That was the beginning of 55 years together.

Melonie and Bryan married in 1972 in a small Episcopal church in Great Falls. Shortly afterward, they moved to Raleigh where Bryan rejoined IBM and Melonie began her career as a surgical nurse at Rex Hospital. Together, they started a family with Ryan born in 1974 and Lane in 1975.

During this period, Melonie met several of her closest life-long friends. Shortly after joining a British wives' club, she was at Pullen Park when Ryan became fascinated by the blue English shoes worn by a young girl with a strange (New Zealand) accent. That girl's mother and an English woman from the club quickly formed a close trio whose bond continued

through years of afternoon meetups as their six children grew. Later this turned into dinners, trips, reunions, and many cherished memories. Her friendship with these amazing women lasted over 45 years.

Following a few years of dedicated motherhood, Melonie completed her studies at Wake Tech, earned her RN certification, and joined the Rex OB/GYN team. She worked part time leading the development of a course for first time parents and became a certified childbirth educator. A flexible schedule at Rex allowed her to continue her career on nights and weekends while being fully engaged with her sons' early years.

In 1987 the opportunity to return to Japan became a reality as Bryan's work led them to Yokohama. Melonie eagerly studied Japanese language and culture while seeing her sons thrive in the multi-national environment of Yokohama.

After returning from Japan in 1989, Melonie joined the NC State Student Health Services where she served as a staff nurse for 23 years. She built and maintained close relationships with many of her colleagues from this time. Some of her fondest memories were from meeting the children whose parents attended her childbirth education courses.

As a parishioner at St. Paul's Cary, Melonie served on the advisory board for the NC State Episcopal Campus Ministry. Later she chaired the St. Paul's Care & Share ministry, whose mission is to serve the immediate short-term needs of St. Paul's members. The flower ministry, started at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, was a special connection to the members of St. Paul's.

Melonie is survived by her mother, Irene Cross, her husband Bryan, sons, Ryan and Lane, brothers, Craig Cross (Jane) and Lance Cross (Laurie), and her dearest cat Rosie.

A Celebration of Melonie's life will be held on August 27th, 2025, at 1 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 221 Union St., Cary, NC 27511. A reception will follow in the parish hall.

Donations may be made in Melonie's memory to St. Paul's Cary or Dorcas Ministries of Cary.