



Katherine Nasfay Scott

January 25, 2023

Katherine "Kate" Nasfay Scott died on January 16, 2023 at Oak Hammock Retirement

Community in Gainesville, Florida, surrounded by loved ones.

Kate was born on New Year's Day 1932 in Budapest, Hungary, to Arpad Nasfay and

Edith Szalagyi. Kate retained a lilting Hungarian accent for the rest of her life as well as

happy memories of her early childhood. She and her little sister, Suzie, lived and played

in the handsome house provided to her father as the Royal Forester of the Esterhazy's.

When Kate was twelve, her family was forced to flee Hungary to Bavaria, ahead of the

Russian invasion. They were among the millions of "displaced persons" after the war.

They lived in a refugee camp for four years while awaiting resettlement.

Kate and her family emigrated, relocating to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1949. Kate

attended the University of Pennsylvania and later Radcliffe College where she earned

her bachelor's degree in Chemistry. Radcliff did not offer chemistry classes, so Kate

took chemistry at Harvard, one of only two women allowed to do so at that time.

Kate met her future husband, Thomas A. Scott, while at Penn and they later married at

Harvard between classes - the only time available to the busy and financially struggling

students. Their son, James, was born in 1956.

The family moved to Gainesville, Florida two years later. Thomas was an assistant

professor of Physics at the University of Florida and Kate worked as a technician at the

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences while earning her masters and doctorate in

Chemistry. She completed her post doctorate in Chemistry and became an assistant

professor in the Department of Radiology, with a joint appointment at the Veterans

Affairs Medical Center. Their daughter, Laura, was born in 1968.

Kate was an ambitious and excellent scientist. She became famous in scientific circles

for her pioneering work on the application of Magnetic Resonance Imaging and

spectroscopy in medicine, particularly as it applied to metabolism and vascular disease.

She also studied the effects of chemotherapy on cancerous tumors. She flourished

professionally while also raising a family - a rarity in her day.

Kate was known for a relaxed nature and her sunny outlook. She let her ten-year-old

son keep his collection of pet garter snakes in the bathtub, scaring the wits out of the

housekeeper when she went to clean the bathroom the next morning. Kate's nephews remember filling squirt guns with grape juice and spraying the bees in Kate's yard -

Kate came home from work to purple splotches all over the floor and a swarm of angry bees but she just laughed. Her cooking was described as "utilitarian" but Kate finished every meal happily, saying she didn't realize how hungry she was and how delicious the food had been. Kate's house was always open - her children returned as adults for various stays and Kate owned multiple dogs, cats, and other pets throughout her life, and often gave a home to stray animals.

Thomas died in in October 1979 and Kate met and married Carl E. Fritz in 1987, and became a loving stepmother to his four children. Together Kate and Carl took up ballroom dancing, winning many amateur competitions in Florida. Carl's favorite dance was the foxtrot, while Kate preferred the cha-cha, rumba, and east coast swing.

Whenever there was music or dancing, Kate wanted to be a part of it. She once fell and broke her ankle in her rush to join a conga line at a wedding.

Kate was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2009 but the disease rarely dimmed her beaming smile or changed her gentle voice with its distinct warble. She remained keenly

appreciative of show tunes, sometimes conducting an imaginary orchestra with her feet as well as her hands, and when she was no longer able to write her name, she wrote it as a mathematical equation. She loved numbers, animals, people-watching, tulips, thrift stores, My Fair Lady, the color red, meals, parties, friends, and her family. She will be greatly missed.

She was predeceased by her husband Carl. Her sister, Suzie, died less than 48 hours after Kate. Nothing could break their bond. Kate is survived by six children: James Scott (Constance Scott); Laura Scott (Erick Vazquez); Mark Fritz (Amelia Fritz); David Fritz (Kathie Fritz); Matthew Fritz (Claire Fritz); Jennifer Fritz (Donald Dunn); and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

A funeral will be held at Forest Meadows Funeral Home, 725 NW 23 rd Ave., Gainesville, on Friday, January 27, 2023. Visitation begins at 10 am, followed by the service at 11 am. There will be a short private committal service at Forest Meadows Cemetery, 3700 SE Hawthorne Road at 2 pm. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider a donation to the Alzheimer's Foundation.