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## In Memorium . . . Ilse M. Bachmann (née Langhans) (December 21, 1932-October 12, 2019)

Monika Bachmann

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*In Memorium . . .*

# Ilse M. Bachmann

(née Langhans)

(December 21, 1932-October 12, 2019)

Ilse Margarete Langhans was born in Allenstein, East Prussia (in present-day Poland), on December 21, 1932, the only daughter of Wilhelm Langhans and Margarete Emelie Issler. Her father was *Oberstadtsqaertner* (head city gardener) in nearby Koenigsburg until he was drafted into the German Army during World War II and killed in action, leaving behind Margarete, Ilse, older brother Juergen, and younger brother Dieter to fend for themselves when they and thousands of other ethnic Germans fled Russian forces invading East Prussia in the winter of 1944.

After a harrowing escape and internment in a refugee camp in 1946, the family was able to make their way into Switzerland. Margarete had been a Swiss national until her marriage to Wilhelm, when she had to forsake her Swiss citizenship and take that of her husband's, but after the war, Switzerland permitted former Swiss war widows like Margarete to be repatriated. This allowed the family to start a new life in Schaffhausen.

This small city by the Rheinfalls is where Ilse, at age 14, met the man with whom she would spend the rest of her life, Heinz B Bachmann. They married in 1958, settled in Zurich, had two sons (Heinz G and Urs B) until 1963, when wanderlust lured the young family first to Morocco, then Liberia (where daughter Monika was born), and ultimately to the United States in 1966.

Ernest intentions of returning to Switzerland after a few exploratory years gradually faded, and in due course, first Ilse (and Monika) in 1994, and soon the rest of the family obtained U.S. citizenship. While Ilse and Heinz would return unflinching every summer for decades to

their homeland and house on the Untersee (Lake of Constance,) the U.S. remained their home for the remainder of her life.

Open spaces first in Potomac, Maryland, and then for the last 27 years near the base of Sugarloaf Mountain in Comus, northwest of Washington, D.C., allowed Ilse to raise and enjoy her beloved Jack Russell Terriers. She devoted her energy towards equestrian pursuits, particularly dressage, eventing, and fox hunting, becoming an accomplished horsewoman. She was a respected 50-year member of the Potomac Hunt and various other horse-related organizations.

Heinz's occupation as a development economist at the World Bank enabled her to accompany her husband on several mission trips to Africa and the Middle East. She passed away at home, aged 86, with her family at her side, after a long battle with dementia.

Ilse is survived by her husband Heinz of 61 years, children Heinz Georg of Stow, Massachusetts; Urs Bernard of Rye, New Hampshire; and Monika M Bachmann of Clarksburg, Maryland; daughter-in-laws Wendy Bachmann and Katherine Bachmann; son-in-law Jim Whitnah, and grandchildren Nicholas, Madeline, Daniel, and Henry Bachmann. Circumstances permitting, the family is planning a private memorial service in Switzerland later this year.

~ *Monika Bachmann*