

ALASKA

OBITUARIES

Obituaries are provided as written by the family of the deceased or by a funeral home. Obituary submission guidelines and pricing info www.newsminer.com/site/forms. Or call the News-Miner at 459-7572 for assistance.

Kathleen 'Mike' Dalton

Kathleen Michael Fitzpatrick was born Sept. 10, 1925, in Flagstaff, Arizona. She was the second of four children born to B.P. Fitzpatrick and Louise Sheehan Fitzpatrick. They called her Mike and the name stuck with her for life. The family soon moved to a Navajo Indian Reservation where her father worked as a maintenance foreman. They later moved to Tucson where Mike completed high school and went on to Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff where she graduated with an English degree.

Mike left Arizona to escape the heat, traveling to Fairbanks in 1949 at the encouragement of her friend Rosie Losonsky. Working at Arctic Contractors, she met Jim Dalton, a lifelong Alaskan. They fell in love and wed at Pt. Barrow, Alaska, Aug. 17, 1950. Mike learned to knit to pass the long winter days and enjoyed experiencing the culture and life-style of the Inupiat people. Jim and Mike made many lasting friendships during their six years in Barrow before they settled in Fairbanks in 1957. Here they purchased land from Charles Bunnell who Jim had met while attending the University of Alaska and built a lovely log home in the hills off Yankovich Road where the family resides today.

While her husband commuted to the North Slope, Mike raised their two toddlers and became active in the College Women's Club and Republican Women's Club. Then in 1961, she went to work for the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner as a reporter/photographer covering births, deaths, crime and news worthy events across the state.

Mike successfully ran for a seat on the first Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly in 1964. This began her career in government service. She went on to manage the Fairbanks office for U.S. Senator Ted Stevens from 1971-78. Next she took a position in Jay Hammond's administration in Juneau, and then moved to head Alaska's office in Washington, D.C. In addition, she worked for state Senator Jack Coghill in the Alaska Legislature.

Always up for an intellectual challenge, Mike took time to complete a two year associate degree in petroleum technology at UAF where she also studied computer science and Japanese. She followed that up with a year in Japanese language training at Middlebury College in Vermont. She traveled to Japan three times: two work related trips and once with the Alaska Goldpanner



Dalton

Baseball Team.

When an opportunity arose to work for the city of Unalaska, Mike moved to Dutch Harbor where she helped organize the 50th commemoration of the bombing of Dutch Harbor and the Japanese occupation of Attu and Kiska Islands. Then, in 1991, when the USSR was collapsing, she participated in the first American delegation visit to the Russian Far East and Kamchatka Peninsula. She made a second trip through Russia on the Trans Siberian Railroad.

Mike took many adventurous trips in her lifetime. She hiked up and down the Grand Canyon four times. She traveled and explored the entire Yukon River on a trip with her husband in 1952. She hiked the Chilkoot Trail with friends and family four times. She made 24 trips up to Prudhoe Bay on the Dalton Highway. She retraced a 100 mile section of the original Dalton Trail to Dawson with family and long time friend Jim Moody, a trip featured by National Geographic Magazine. She, along with friends Vuka Stepovich and Alaska Linck, traveled to the 40 Mile River where Crystal McQuesten Morgan was born and lived just prior to the gold rush of 1898. Then she traveled to California to meet Crystal and share the occasion. This was the start of the Arctic Sisterhood, an exclusive club whose charter

members Crystal, Vuka, Alaska and Mike, enjoyed years of good times and laughs.

A dedicated member of the Alaska Pioneers, Mike served in every office including that of president of Women's Igloo #8 in 1997. While she claimed no expertise as a historian, she managed to preserve sizable chunks of Alaska's legacy that were in danger of being lost. She once rescued the Fairbanks News Miner's World War II photo archives from a dumpster where they had been discarded by an editor new to Alaska. She and longtime friend Lael Morgan were responsible for returning to the state 24 Sydney Laurence paintings from California and documenting the original owner's colorful history. She was the first to record interviews with old-timers for the University of Alaska Archives, organizing the ambitious project and successfully writing a grant to fund the assignment which took her to Nome, Kotzebue, Rampart, Nenana, Ft. Yukon, Central, Eagle, Juneau and Anchorage during 1973-75. Among the old-timers she interviewed were Clara Rust, Albo Gregory, Emmet Bothelo, Charles Creamer, Winifred Coghill and Forbes Baker.

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James A. Vickery

James A. Vickery, age 90, of North Pole, passed away on Thursday, Feb. 14, at his home.

James was born on May 30, 1928, in Exeter, California to William and Nellie (Knowlton) Vickery. He was married on Dec. 1950 to Mary Jane Dotson in North Pole, where they were married 59 years. James

was also employed by the state of Alaska as a corrections officer. James loved to fish in Valdez and whenever possible, he'd travel there. He



Vietnam. He was a very loving husband and father.

James is survived by his loving wife, Mary Jane Vickery, of North Pole and sons, Don Vickery of Fairbanks and

Jo Ann (Debra)

Jo Ann (Debra) ... a short 'l'

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While her husband and she raised their children, she was active in the Fairbanks College Women's Club, the Republican Women's Club. Then in 1961, she began to work for the Fairbanks News-Miner as a reporter/graphic artist covering births, deaths, crime and news worthy of the state. She successfully ran for a seat on the first Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly in 1964. This began her career in government service. She went on to manage the Fairbanks office for U.S. Senator Ted Stevens from 1971-78. She then took a position in Raymond's administration in Anchorage, and then moved to head the state's office in Washington. In addition, she worked for Senator Jack Coghill in the Alaska Legislature. She always says up for an intellectual challenge, Mike took time to complete a two year associate degree in petroleum technology at UAF where she also studied computer science and Japanese. She followed that up with a year of Japanese language training at Lehigh University in Vermont. She traveled to Japan three times: two work related trips and one with the Alaska Goldpanner



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concern for ill-cared muskoxen under early federal stewardship or trash clean up day, she always made the time to be there. Mike preferred to work behind the scenes on causes she felt were important but recognition sometimes caught up with her. She was an award winning member of the Alaska Outdoor Council. She was a valued member of the Tanana Yukon Historical Society and Women in Mining. She worked relentlessly for Republican candidates running for local, state and national offices. Yet it was Mike's community service at the grass-roots level, her quiet generosity and often self-sacrificing contributions to help others in need that will be remembered best.

The family would like to thank home health care workers Chris and Ashley Warner, ResCare and Hospice who helped care for her.

Mike is survived by her son, George Dalton, and daughter, Libby Dalton Slane (Danny); grandchildren, Daniel Slane, Rebecca Newell (Marcus); and great-granddaughter, Mia Newell, all of Fairbanks. Niece, Cathy Fitzpatrick Platt, of California; and sisters, Jerry, of Spokane, and Pat, in Tucson, also survive her. A memorial celebration will be held for Mike at 3 p.m. on March 9 at Pioneer Hall at Pioneer Park.

Please visit www.legacy.com/obituaries/newsminer to sign an online guest book.

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