

**Robin Burguières Bristow** - Marie Robin Burguières Bristow, daughter of Ernest Aloysius and Isabella Moore Burguières, passed away on October 3, 2020 after surviving COVID-19 over the summer. Born in her parents' home on 5908 Garfield Street in New Orleans, Louisiana on February 13, 1932, she was the granddaughter of Leila Hardie and Robert Moore of New Orleans and Marie Corinne Patout and Jules Martial Burguières of Cypremort Plantation, St. Mary Parish, Louisiana and New Orleans.



*Marie Robin Burguières Bristow  
February 13 1932 – October 3, 2020*

Her life was as unique as the city in which she was born. Childhood summers were spent in the neighborhood around her home with lifelong friends. She traveled with her father on his business trips out to the J. M. Burguières Company property in St. Mary Parish and to her Moore grandparents' summer cottage, "The Nest", on the Wolf River near Pass Christian, Mississippi. She also spent summers at Camp Riva-Lake in Tennessee. As an older teen she modeled for several department stores in New Orleans and was a Maid in the Sugar Cane Festival in New Iberia, Louisiana in 1948. She attended the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans, graduating with honors in 1950 and then graduated on the Dean's List from Hollins College in Virginia in 1954 with a degree in Psychology and a teaching certificate. While at Hollins she competed on the equestrian team winning the silver cup for best rider in 1951. Robin made her debut in New Orleans on December 20, 1952 and was active in Mardi Gras as a Maid in several courts during the 1951-53 seasons, most notably in the Court of Rex in 1953. She went on to earn a master's degree in clinical psychology from the Richmond Professional Institute of the College of William & Mary in 1957 (now Virginia Commonwealth University).

At Hollins she met the love of her life, Allen Bristow, on a blind date which almost turned deadly. Sleep deprived from studying late too many nights in a row, he momentarily dozed off while driving and snagged a guardrail. Amazingly she still agreed to a second date! Quick thinking Allen realized she loved olives so he "procured" a gallon size jar from the dining hall at Virginia Tech which he

presented to her upon his arrival. The olives, his charm, the twinkle in his eyes and fun-loving attitude ultimately sealed the deal and on December 27, 1956 they were married at the Church of the Most Holy Name of Jesus in New Orleans. They started married life in Richmond, Virginia while Allen finished dental school at the Medical College of Virginia, moved to Tampa, Florida while he was on active duty with the Air Force and then to his home town, West Point, Virginia, where he established his dental practice. They lived the remainder of their lives there. Allen frequently told his children that each day with their mother was “like Christmas - full of surprises”.

Once settled, Robin immediately became involved in various civic activities in West Point, King William County and statewide. She saw an urgent need for comprehensive, accessible mental health services for the Middle Peninsula Region. There were no public resources or facilities available, so Robin set out to change the course of mental health care in the region. She founded and chaired the Middle Peninsula Northern Neck Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services Board which provides mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse services to residents in ten counties. In honor of her vision, years of leadership and exhaustive efforts, a building was dedicated in her name on December 20, 1988. Robin also served in numerous leadership roles and boards which involved providing mental health services to various other parts of eastern and central Virginia such as the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards and the Tidewater Mental Health Clinic Advisory Board. Additionally, she was a Lay Representative to the Executive Committee for Region IV of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, Virginia. She was the Director of the West Point Area Improvement Association, board member of both the King William County Public Library & Community Center and the West Point Library, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair and Program Chair of the King William County Women’s Club and President of the Monday Club. She was frequently appointed to positions because of her reputation and skills.

Robin was a member of the Junior League of New Orleans and later, Richmond, Virginia, The Colony Club of New York and the Farmington Country Club of Charlottesville. Her hobbies and interests were as varied as the friends she made everywhere she went. She loved to talk with strangers and occasionally she was known to talk someone in a store into buying something they probably didn’t

need. After Allen died, she continued to volunteer her time as a member of the Human Rights Committee for Williamsburg and then the Hampton Roads area. She retired when she reached the maximum length of service at the age of 84. Robin will be remembered for her joy in living, sense of fairness, her drive and compassion for those less fortunate. Every holiday, birthday or milestone was a cause for celebration with a little glass of champagne. Robin would toast by quoting her Grandparents: "May you live long and prosper". She signed off every call with her family with "I love you to infinity and beyond" and she meant it.

Robin was preceded in death by her loving and generally patient husband, Dr. Otis Allen Bristow, Jr., her brother Ernest Aloysius Burguières, Jr., her sister Joan Burguières Brown, baby sisters Isabella Moore Burguières and Leila Moore Marie Burguières and her nephews William Perry "Pepper" Brown IV and godson Francis Scott Brown as well as a grandson Gabriel Damon Hines. She is survived by her children: daughter Leila Marie Bristow Hines and husband Donald, son Otis Allen Bristow, III, beloved former daughter-in-law Wendy Dunbar Bristow, daughter Marie Robin Bristow White and husband John and her granddaughters: Lauren Brooke Bristow, Isabella Marie White, and Olivia Marie Hines as well as her nieces and nephews, great-nieces and nephews, great-great-nieces and nephews, cousins and dear friends.

The family will receive friends from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday, October 8th at Vincent Funeral Home, 417 11<sup>th</sup> Street, West Point, Virginia. Due to COVID-19, please observe all necessary precautions. A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated on Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 11 o'clock in the morning at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, 3570 King William Avenue, West Point, Virginia. To ensure the safety of all guests, and in adherence to COVID-19 protocols, the church is requesting guests wear masks and practice social distancing. An interment service will be held at Sunny Slope Cemetery in West Point following Mass. Remembrances may be made in the form desired by friends.