

Sylvia Fitts Getchell



Sylvia Fitts Getchell died at Exeter Hospital on November 17th 2012. She was the widow of Dr. L. Forbes Getchell. She was born at Wentworth Hospital in Dover, NH on July 3, 1925, a daughter to the late Perley Irving Fitts and Marguerite Elizabeth (Marden) Fitts. She grew up in Durham, NH, attending grade school there and high school in Dover. "Syl" received a B.A. magna cum laude at U.N.H. in 1947 majoring in History. She went on to Simmons College where she received a B.S. in Library Science in 1948. Sylvia worked as a professional cataloger at Columbia University in NYC from 1948-51 and held a similar position at UNH from 1951-2. She was the Newmarket school librarian for 15 years (1970-85). Sylvia was an active and contributing member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Mrs. Getchell is remembered for her roles as Brownie and Girl Scout leader. She worked as a volunteer in the library and was a docent for many years at the American Independence Museum in Exeter, N.H. She served as president of Piscataqua Pioneers, 1973-74. Sylvia married her best friend,

Leonard Forbes Getchell, also from Durham, in 1948.

History was Sylvia's great love. She published three extensive genealogies and a history of life on the Lamprey River in the town of Newmarket. The genealogies include her mother's family (Marden), her father's (Fitts), and her husband's (Getchell). Her children remember that on family adventures they were always stopping at graveyards while "Mom" wandered with her notebook and pen. As well as those large publications, she published an historical map of Newmarket and two other smaller historical pamphlets.

Gifts in her memory can be donated to the Newmarket Community Church or to the Newmarket Historical Society.