

Beth Brown Limmer
Dartmouth-Hitchcock
by Ann Hinga Klein
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The Road Well Traveled

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Janet Brown has generously supported Dartmouth-Hitchcock. Now, her daughter is continuing the legacy.

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Beth Brown Limmer slid into her Subaru Forester. Almost a year and a half had passed since her mother had died peacefully at her home in Castleton.

Now, nudged by a professional meeting in Hanover, Beth knew it was time: She would drive Route 4 again.

As she merged onto the highway, she pictured her mother beside her—straight back, short curls, red polar fleece hat, tipped just so. They'd driven this road together close to 100 times.

Beth topped Mendon Mountain, blinking tears as she passed a blurred watercolor of shimmering yellow birches, red sugar maples, and crimson ashes. Her mother would have called this a Top 10 Day. She thought about all the times they had road-tripped together in the 37 years after her father's death, venturing up into Canada, south to Florida, and west to Michigan, crossing the big lake by ferry.

Her mother's health had been robust until 1995, when her nose and mouth began to go numb. The symptom came and went. Local doctors dismissed it.

"I'm getting driven out of my mind by this," she confided to her daughter.

"Let's find a neurologist at Dartmouth," Beth replied.

In Hanover, Dr. Jim Bernat looked Janet in the eye and listened. A nurse practitioner, Beth knew patient compassion was a gift. She was surprised by his Dilantin prescription and thrilled when it worked. They settled into a routine of calls and visits.

Later, when Janet developed a rare blood disorder, Dr. Bernat recommended Dartmouth-Hitchcock's Dr. Cornelius Cornell, Jr., who offered the same caring rapport.

Now, as the Route 4 began its dance with the Ottauquechee River, Beth reflected on her mother's generosity. She had given her four children carefree childhoods in the family's big house on Lake Bomoseen. Later, she'd established a Dartmouth-Hitchcock charitable gift annuity. She was happy to support the place where she'd gained years of wellbeing.

Passing through Woodstock, Beth spotted its steeples. "Yes, Ma," she said. "It *is* a pretty day here."

Her phone flickered. Her husband, Paul, had known the trip would be hard. Now, she told him everything: the memories, the tears, even a shout or two at the heavens.

He listened intently before his practical New Englander kicked in. "Well," he said, "I guess we're going to have to take that road off our list of roads to go on."

"Not at all," Beth replied. "Now, I've done it."

[End box]

Beth Brown Limmer has established a charitable gift annuity in her mother's name. To learn more about honoring your loved one, contact... *[additional information will go here.]*