



Phyllis Saranec

May 23, 1919 - January 9, 2014

Phyllis Marie Ross Saranec, a New Haven native, and lately of Spring Glen, Hamden, died peacefully on January 9th from complications sustained in a recent fall. She was 94. Mrs. Saranec was born on May 23, 1919, the middle daughter of the late Robert Patrick Ross, also a New Haven native, and Margaret Maud Fox Ross of Madoc, Canada, whose family were members of the Canadian Empire Loyalists.

Mrs. Saranec attended Worthington Hooker School and graduated from Hillhouse High School in 1936. She graduated from Southern Connecticut State University, formerly the New Haven State Teacher's College, in 1940, with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education, focused on Kindergarten through Grade 8. At college, she was a member of the Press Club and was elected to "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges". During the wartime summer of 1942, Phyllis taught in a W.P.A. Child Care Project, and a year later in the summer of 1943, she worked at the Winchester Gun Company supporting the war effort. In 1944, she received a Master of Arts degree from Yale University, specializing in Education and School Psychology.

Mrs. Saranec initially taught elementary education in the towns of Wilton and Woodbridge, and later substitute taught in New Haven and Hamden. She served as an intern in school counseling in East Haven, Woodbridge, and

Ansonia before becoming a training teacher at Barnard School in New Haven. Later, she became an assistant professor at Southern, serving as a training teacher, but resigned in 1947 after meeting and marrying Eddie Saranec in April, 1946. Mrs. Saranec furthered her education at SCSC by attaining 4 additional Master of Science degrees: School Psychology (1973), Counseling (1979), Reading Consultancy (1990) ESL and Bilingual Education (1996). Additionally, Mrs. Saranec also received two 6th Year Professional Diplomas, one in School Psychology (1976) and the other in Reading Consulting (1990). Her last degree was earned at the age of 77.

Mrs. Saranec served as the first Secretary of the St. Rita School-Home Association. She established the St. Rita School Library and designed programs for the Library Mothers. Additionally, she served as Program Chairman for the St. Rita Church Ladies Guild, and volunteered for the parish Young Parents Ministry and the church pre-school groups. Outside of her parish, Mrs. Saranec volunteered as a tutor for individual literacy students and for ESL at SCSU, and for adult students at the Center for Adult Education in New Haven. She also volunteered for the Hamden Adult Education.

Following the death of her husband, the late Eddie Saranec, a local professional musician, orchestra leader, and owner of Saranec Piano and Organ Company, Mrs. Saranec took over as President of his music business and managed it for the following 8 years. During this time, Mrs. Saranec also obtained a Connecticut Real Estate and Brokers License.

Mrs. Saranec was an active member of St. Rita Church in Spring Glen, the New Haven Council of Catholic Women, The Yale Club of New Haven, The Yale Graduate Association, the Southern Connecticut Alumni Association, the Musicians Union Local 234, Program Chairman for St. Mary's High School Mother's Club, Taft School Parent's Club, Books Sandwiched In, La Salette Debutante Ball Committee, The Friends of the New Haven Public Library,

Friends of the Hamden Library, AARP, the Spring Glen Civic Association, and a former member of the New Haven Figure Skating Club, the High Lane Club and the Owenego Beach Club.

Those who knew Phyllis can attest to the fact that she was an organized, focused and independent soul, with a feisty New Englander streak in her. She was a kind and giving woman, a loving mother and grandmother. She enjoyed antiquing and collecting cut glass, oriental rugs, stamps, marbles and coins, singing, classical music, and speaking and reading in French. She also enjoyed traveling through Canada as a child, up and down the eastern coast with her own family, to California and Hawaii with her western children, and finally to her “family home” in Thrum, Ireland. Her life goals were to be an educated and informed citizen, to educate and launch her children into successful adulthood, and to help those less fortunate in their education. Phyllis kept current on all subjects and loved to converse on topics ranging from nursery rhymes and songs to current politics and economic policy. She also enjoyed writing creative short stories and poetry in her youth, and in her later years, focused on writing solemn prayers. Her intense Catholic faith was incredibly important to her. She was also an outdoor and sports enthusiast. In her youth she served as a camp counselor for 6 summers, first at the Register Fresh Air Camp and later at Camp Mohawk, where, known as “Skipper”, she was the director of the waterfront and taught sports. Her interest in sports led her to eventually teach all of her children to figure or hockey skate, to swim at competitive levels, and to hit a winning cross-court forehand.

Mrs. Saranec was preceded in death by her parents, her two sisters (Dr. Margery Ross and Ms. Mabel Tower), her husband (Eddie Saranec), and her daughter (Elisabeth Petersen). She is survived by her daughter Cynthia Livermore of Ross, California, her son, Christopher Saranec of Studio City, California, 6 grandchildren, and one great grandson.

The Saranec Family would like to acknowledge and thank The Mary Wade House and The Arden Courts for their excellent care of Phyllis in her later years. In addition, many thanks to Karen Hanson, Phyllis' neighbor and friend, for her extraordinary friendship, kindness, generosity and assistance in shepherding Phyllis into eternal life. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at St. Rita Church, 1620 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, at 10 AM on Saturday, February 8, 2014. Friends are asked to go directly to the church. Funeral arrangements are with Sisk Brothers Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

St. Lawrence

280 Derby Ave.
West Haven, CT

Previous Events

Funeral service

FEB 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Rita Church
1620 Whitney Ave.
Hamden, CT

Tribute Wall

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“*Death of a loved one is never easy. May you find an abundance of comfort in your family, friends and especially the future blessings found in God's word. He has promised to swallow up death forever and reunite us with all who fall asleep in death. (Isaiah 25:8, John 5:28,29) As a God of love who cannot lie we can certainly trust all he says to come true. (1 John 4:8 & Titus 1:2) It is my hope that these words and the fond memories of your loved one sustain you through this most difficult time.*

D'Anita - February 04, 2014 at 06:58 AM