



Winifred Brandt Colleran

December 5, 1939 - February 23, 2026

Winifred “Wini” Brandt Colleran, 86, died peacefully at home in North Haven, Connecticut, on February 23, after a short battle with cancer, surrounded by her family.

Wini was born on December 5, 1939, in Suffern, New York, to Flora Marguerite Shelbourne and Bernard Culver Brandt. She grew up in East Orange, New Jersey, and Springfield, Massachusetts, alongside her brother, Geoffrey Brandt.

She graduated from Bay Path Junior College and worked for American Airlines for more than a decade in the 60s, rising to Supervisor of Stewardesses. Later in life, she spent many meaningful years working at Hopkins School in New Haven in a number of different roles including as the President of the Parent Council and in the Development Office.

The majority of Wini’s life, and the years she treasured most, were spent in North Haven, Connecticut, where she and her husband of 57 years, John Colleran, raised their four sons. Together they built a beautiful home, a loving marriage, and a family that became the center of everything. When Wini talked about her life, she always returned to the same truth: family was who she was. She was also a longtime parishioner of St. Thomas More Chapel in New Haven, where her faith was an important and steady presence in her life. She is survived by her husband, John, and their four sons, David, Timothy, Matthew, and Kevin. She always said to them plainly, “You are my life.” She was a loving mother-in-law to Rose, Erin, Laura, and Erica, and a proud and

devoted grandmother to her nine grandchildren: Madison, Megan, Riley, Ryan, Jack, Nora, Kennedy, Andrew, and Brandt. She called them her legacy and was proud of that legacy beyond words.

Wini loved her home and her plants. She cultivated a number of beautiful gardens there and, for many years, cared for multiple spaces at Edgerton Park. She treasured the friendships that grew from these shared passions. She loved art of all kinds, especially metal sculpting. For more than 30 years, she took classes at Creative Arts Workshop. She greatly valued her many friends in the North Haven Garden Club and the Women's Book Club. These communities brought her creativity, laughter, and deep connection.

She spoke with joy about her family traditions, ColleranFest, Colleran Christmas, and their summer and winter family vacations in Aspen, Colorado. She knew these traditions were the substance of her family. When people heard about them, they often told her how lucky she was, and she agreed. When reflecting on her life, Wini struggled to think of anything she would change. She felt grateful for all she had been given and was at peace with the life she lived.

Wini was not afraid of dying. She felt she had done everything she wanted to do in her life, except watch her grandchildren grow up. There was nothing else she longed for, nothing else she felt was missing. She felt complete.

She believed she was at a good ending. She felt loved. She felt grateful. She felt blessed beyond measure. She had a beautiful family, a loving marriage, meaningful friendships, and a life she would not trade for any other.

Calling hours will be held on Friday, February 27, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Sisk Brothers Funeral Home, 3105 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, February 28, at 11:00 a.m. at Saint Thomas More Chapel, 268 Park Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

Friends are requested to go directly to the church on Saturday. For those unable to attend in person, the service will be livestreamed and information can be found on the church's website {<https://subsplash.com/u/saintthomasmorechapeland/media/d/kv8xtrx-mass-of-christian-burial-for-winifred-colleran-sa>

turday-february-28-2026} Burial will follow at St. Lawrence Cemetery.
In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to Creative Arts
Workshop, 80 Audubon Street, New Haven, Connecticut, or the North Haven
Garden Club, 12 Stanton Road, North Haven, Connecticut.

Cemetery Details

St Lawrence Cemetery

280 Derby Avenue
West Haven, CT 06516
<http://ccacem.org>

Previous Events

Calling hours

FEB **27**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Sisk Brothers Funeral Home
3105 Whitney Ave
PO Box 185066
Hamden, CT 06518

Funeral Mass

FEB **28**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Thomas More Chapel
268 Park St
New Haven, CT

Tribute Wall

ND

“ I just found out that Wini had passed. I so loved spending time with her at my garden center. I have years and years of fond memories talking with her about plants and life. She was a great woman and I will miss her. My love and condolences to her beautiful family.
Nancy DuBrule

Nancy DuBrule - April 07 at 08:25 AM

HG

“ 3 files added to the album *Photos of Wini Colleran*



Heller Gregory - February 28 at 12:39 PM

HG

“ *What a beautiful ceremony! I had to stream from the Bay Area in CA where my mom first met Wini as a stewardess for American. They became fast friends, and "Aunt Wini" has been an anchor in my life at pivotal times, even before I was born as support for my mom when she was pregnant with me. Then she had us come out to Aspen when I was 15 and David was a baby, just my mom & I went out.*

We had another great trip to their house in CT, where she gave us the VIP treatment and tour of the area and ideas for my boy house :).

She always kept in touch with me, and especially my mom. She was more worried about my mom's fading memory than her own diagnosis when she called with the bad news, consoling me that she had a good life and was blessed.

On that side of things, because she had her four healthy boys closer to 40 she took that job very seriously, as well as being super grandma! Making sure to participate fully in each grandchild's life, to leave an unbelievable legacy for all of us. I'll never know how she had time for us? But she did, to the very end and up to the last week where I was able to send her a pick flying out of Oakland, looking back on Marin where it all started for her friendship with my mom, and meeting Jack. I think of her every time I go over or under that Golden Gate! Forever imbedded in my heart. xoxo

Heller Edgington-Gregory

Heller Gregory - February 28 at 12:28 PM

LI

“ My first introduction to wonderful Wini was through my Dad, Albert Cretella Jr. who was in politics with Jack. I became one of the first babysitters for the boys, starting with David as a newborn when I was 15...over 50 years ago. I adored Wini from my first encounter and she became a mentor, someone who was beautiful inside and out. When my Mom died at age 60, Wini was there for me. Even though I no longer lived in Connecticut, she remained in my life, always checking in on me with her lovely letters. I often visited her when I was in Conn and she greeted me with those beautiful smiling eyes, a big hug, wanting to know the "latest" in my life. She demonstrated what it meant to be a loving wife, devoted mother and adoring grandmother. To Jack, the boys and grandchildren, her loss will be felt in your hearts forever. I pray that you will find solace and healing knowing that she has touched so many lives and is now resting in peace with our loving God. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

Lisa Cretella Koches

Lisa - February 28 at 11:26 AM



“ 93 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Sisk Brothers Funeral Home - February 27 at 03:26 PM



“ My late father Geoffrey Brandt was Wini’s only brother... my dear, sweet Aunt Wini and I lived on opposite ends of the country for our entire lives, however there are so many memories to treasure! My earliest at only four years of age, when she as a frequent visitor during her early days at American Airlines to visit “the nieces she loved to pieces” and make up and sing silly songs to us that I still remember 60 years later. As a 12-year-old when she and Jack married, I sent them a “lucky 50 cent piece” with a young and silly blessing, which I learned she hung on to her entire life. She and Jack hosted me for more than one visit, and even introduced me to NYC for my first Broadway play and Rockettes performance as a young adult. Later in life, Wini would meet me in the city several times while I traveled on business, and after I retired and was widowed, Wini guided me through her favorite spots in North Haven and to Boston during a magical week we spent together. I will never forget the overwhelming love, emotion and tears I experienced when she pulled EVERY member of the Colleran clan together, where I was re-introduced to my adult cousins and met their beautiful families.

Wini was such a force in my life that my husband waited to honor her by proposing to me in her living room a few years ago... a gesture that represented what she has always meant to me. Her joy that day was like that of a mother.

I will miss Wini deeply and FOREVER cherish the special twinkle she had in her eye and in her soul. Sending love and condolences to my Uncle Jack and Cousins David, Tim, Matt and Kevin on your profound loss.



Marianne Baricelli - February 26 at 08:58 PM

KC

“ I am sending prayers of strength to the Colleran family at this difficult time. I was lucky to have met Wini through the garden club and was so impressed with her knowledge of plants. She was an accomplished lady but more importantly a wonderful friend. I am a better person for having known her. Until we meet again...

Kimberly Yates Carew - February 26 at 07:26 PM

MS

“ I will be forever grateful that I got to spend two days with Wini a few weeks before she died. We relived so many happy memories of a forty year long friendship. We loved, we laughed and we cried. Wini had a way of always making people feel special. Acceptance, laughter, grace and dignity is how she lived and how she died. Wini, I will miss you deeply and you will always have a place in my heart. You will always be an example of how to live my life. I will never forget the laughter and love we shared together. Rest in peace my dear friend. Mimi Schlumberger

Mimi Schlumberger - February 26 at 06:13 PM

JF

“ Wini and I were friends for 65 years. We met when we were both living in Sausalito, California and she was with American Airlines, I with Pan Am. Then, wonder of wonders, when we each married our husbands became best friends, too. The four of us have shared so many wonderful times together over the years, and my own special memory is of the trip she and I took to China. We both love reading and I will really miss sharing books with her as well as our phone calls. She was a very special person and losing her will leave big holes in our hearts. How we will miss her!
Jeannie and John Fuller

Jeannie and John Fuller - February 25 at 08:08 PM

KH

“ I’m so sorry for your loss! Our families made so many wonderful and silly memories skiing in Colorado. We were so blessed to have known and loved Wini -and all of you! Love to you all!
Karen Stevens Helene

Karen Helene - February 25 at 06:07 PM



“ Sending my deepest condolences to the entire Colleran clan. I am forever grateful for the brief time I got to spend with Aunt Wini. Each of you are testament to her grace and love. May you all be blessed and comforted.

Craig Ketelsen - February 25 at 02:16 PM

BD

“ My condolences to the Colleran family. Ben DelMonico

Benjamin DelMonico - February 25 at 01:28 PM

JB

“ Every Sunday after mass at St. Thomas More, Winnie and Jack would take me home. Winnie was so upbeat and often talked about her amazing family. She was the most incredible gardener that I have ever met. Because of her and her advice, my plants are still alive after more than a year.. I will miss her so much. What a gift she was to the world.

Judy Brennan - February 25 at 01:04 PM

MF

“ Marianne Brandt Baricelli and family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Winifred Brandt Colleran.



Marianne Brandt Baricelli and family - February 25 at 12:54 PM

MF

“ Marianne Brandt Baricelli and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Winifred Brandt Colleran.

Marianne Brandt Baricelli and family - February 25 at 12:54 PM



“ While we appreciate that you may want to send flowers or gifts to show your love for Wini, our family has everything that we need at this time. Your messages, memories, and prayers are all that we would ask for.

Thank you.

Kevin, Tim, Matt, and Dave (Wini's boys)

Kevin Colleran - February 25 at 12:40 PM



“ Thank you to all of Wini's friends and family who were so wonderful, kind, and loving to our mom throughout her 86 years. She loved you all.

Love,

Kevin, Tim, Matt, and Dave (Wini's boys)

Kevin Colleran - February 25 at 12:30 PM

KC

“ 9 files added to the album *Photos of Wini Colleran*



Kevin Colleran - February 25 at 12:21 PM