



Dorothy E. Davis

December 19, 2018

Dorothy Elizabeth Davis, 95, of Scituate, passed away on December 19, 2018 at home after a brief hospital stay as was her final wish.

She was the widow of Earl Wheaton Davis. She was born in Providence on June 3, 1923, to the late Vincent Joseph and Helen Gertrude (Murphy) Diffley.

She leaves her daughters: Judy Loranger and Nancy Davis and Nancy's fiancé Simon Beard, also of Scituate; her grandchildren: Kirsten (Tipple) and husband Scott Baughan, Erin (Tipple) husband Michael Cote, and Andrea Tipple and wife Olha Motsna; as well as her five great grandchildren: Zachary, Logan, Kylie, Paige and Devin; and her siblings: Rosena Kresl and husband Del of Washougal, WA and Maureen Gilmore of Pawtucket; and many nieces and nephews. She was the sister of the late Helen Lucille Conti, Vincent Joseph Diffley, and Marguerite Petereit.

Dorothy worked for the United States Postal Service (USPS) in Scituate and Pawtucket before she was appointed Postmaster in Albion, RI in 1979. She was among the first female Postmasters in RI. She executed the duties of that office with enthusiasm going above and beyond fulfilling postal regulations and the responsibilities of her office. She was recognized for her exceptional work with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEO) and also was presented with an award by the USPS for her "support of community

activities in the commemoration of the United States Bicentennial Commission”.

She received The RI Bicentennial Commission Award for “history making participation towards the commemoration of 200 years of American history”. In 1996 she was appointed an Honorary Sergeant in recognition of “special trust and confidence in her patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities” by the Adjutant General, Commanding General, RI National Guard. Her efforts contributed to laying the groundwork for the construction of the Scituate Bandstand and she was a participant in the bandstand groundbreaking ceremony.

Following her retirement from the United States Postal Service, she worked for Bank of America and Winfield & Sons Funeral Home in Scituate well into her mid to late eighties. At the time of her retirement from the bank, she was their oldest employee. In her varied roles at Winfield & Sons, and as a life long Scituate resident, she found meaningful, rewarding work greeting, supporting, and offering the service prayers to the bereaved. Perhaps most importantly, she provided a familiar face, steady faithful presence, and a comforting anecdote or two as she often personally knew the person who had passed or the family in some capacity.

As a young woman, while affiliated with the Congregation of Notre Dame, she taught at the Jacques Cartier Normal School, Montreal, Canada. She attended DePaul University in Chicago studying education and was a graduate of Saint Mary’s Academy, Providence. She had a varied career and often said “I never had a job I didn’t like” finding joy in the people with whom she worked and in getting the job done.

Dorothy was an active member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Queen of Sheba Chapter, and held the office of Worthy Matron for several years. She

had a strong sense of civic duty and public service. She was most often seeking ways to celebrate those who fought for our country or fighting herself for those who could not do so for themselves, whether for improvements in the schools, sending letters and care packages to the troops, or pressing the boundaries for equal opportunities.

She was known for her quick wit, kind heart, and “gift of gab” as much as her perseverance and commitment to civic and community service. She evolved to become an animal lover under the the influence of a very special and charming “grand dog,” Lucky, and “grand cat,” Snoopy. She was always up for an adventure or a party, whether joining a local gym in her eighties and hiring a personal trainer, driving across the U.S., or taking on a new hobby or club like the Red Hat Society. Her strong, quiet faith was less obvious, but perhaps most defining. Her inner and outer beauty, openness, and strength shined through all that she tackled personally and professionally and, in her later years, physically. She had a unique spirit combining toughness with a gentle, faithful heart that allowed her to push through challenges. She was a true “people person.” She wanted to help if she could. Her greatest pride and joy, however, were her great grandchildren, grandchildren and children. She will be missed by each of them and by anyone who had the pleasure of knowing her.

My mother

No one stronger

No one more generous

A hard life

A soft heart

She taught me to push through the most trying of circumstances

She wanted to make it to 100

Her kidneys didn't

I could not feel more love for another human being or have a better role model for perseverance

She never said the words I love you but that would likely have paled in comparison to how she lived

I love you Mom

Her funeral will be held Thursday, December 27, 2018 at 8:45 a.m. from the Winfield & Sons Funeral Home followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 10:00 a.m. in St. Joseph Church, Danielson Pike, Scituate. Burial will follow at Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Exeter. Calling Hours will be held Wednesday, December 26, 2018 from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Winfield & Sons Funeral Home, 571 West Greenville Road, Scituate. In lieu of flowers donations in Dorothy's memory may be made to the Friends of the Scituate Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 14, Clayville, RI 02815, fsasri.org or Saint Jude's Children's Research Hospital, stjude.org

St. Jude's Children's Hospital: Understands, treats, and defeats childhood cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Friends of Scituate Animal Shelter: Helping to find the perfect home for lost animals.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 26. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Winfield & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory
571 West Greenville Road (Route 116)
Scituate, RI 02857
(401) 647-5421

Funeral

DEC 27. 8:45 AM (ET)

Winfield & Sons Funeral Home and Crematory
571 West Greenville Road (Route 116)
Scituate, RI 02857
(401) 647-5421

Mass of Christian Burial

DEC 27. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Joseph Church
144 Danielson Pike
Scituate, RI 02857

Tribute Wall

“ Eulogy

There was something about my mother; and I've tried and tried to put my finger on it.

It's true there was rarely an awkward silence in her presence.

She had the Irish “gift of gab.”

But what makes her the individual she was? We all lose loved ones; they're all special. It seems important to try to identify what makes them so.

People always remarked about my mother's beauty, her strength, her willingness to take on a worthy fight, and, in her younger days, her work ethic and energy. But it's not just the “fighting Irish” nature within, or her “gift of gab,” or her big heart that defined her and made her special. It's not her wit, her courage, or her fears.

For as long as I can remember I heard about Saint Jude. “Pray to Saint Jude” she would say — unless I lost something, then it was Saint Anthony of course — But most often it was Saint Jude in our lives, patron Saint of the hopeless. She named my sister after him. She had a special connection with him. My mother never disclosed what it was. But it was. As open, and trusting, and people oriented as she was. It was private. She was private. And what I believe defined her and kept her going, was not what so many who knew her would say: that she was strong, that she was the strongest woman they knew even, or that she was resilient.

It was her hope. It was her faith in God, and a trust so deep and so at home within her that even when she herself thought she may have lost it, it was right there. It was a part of her that lived from within. It was not a thing she had. It was who she was. And on those occasions, including the week before she passed, that she almost thought she'd lost it or never had to begin with, it was really just that it had taken a different form. Internalized. Within. So she didn't recognize it.



She told me four days before she passed, after a terrible night of pain and discomfort, that she couldn't pray any more. That she couldn't pray like me and that I was like Grandma Murphy, who apparently could pray like nobody's business.

I told her "Just talk to God; like you would talk to anyone. Ask Him to protect and care for you. Ask for him to be with you and guide you. Talk to Him the way you are talking with me. Ask for help."

My mother didn't like to ask for help. It made growing old hard, not to ask for help. Note to self and to any others here who think they might grow older: learn to receive help. She had always been the helper. Not the helpee so to speak. She much preferred that role,

I wish I'd realized, in the moments of that conversation about her sense that she couldn't pray, what I realized a few days later so I could have shared it with her.

It wasn't that she couldn't pray anymore. The body, her brain, couldn't sequence the words any more, probably due to the mild stroke, the subtle memory and concentration loss that she hid so well, almost too well such that people thought she was okay, and didn't need to worry about Dottie. I think her brain's difficulty remembering and sequencing interfered with formal prayer and remembering rituals, which, for her, translated to "I can't pray anymore." The same way physical pain interfered with her ability to sit through a service or mass. I asked her if she would like me to call a priest. An emphatic "No," was the answer that day.- That is again where the being able to receive help stuff would have come in handy. -

So it was just us. Trying to sort out the pain, the prayer. Or maybe not just us. Maybe God and us. But it didn't matter and I wish I'd thought to tell her that. Because she lived her faith.

She had hope. She trusted in God even when she couldn't articulate that trust or express it in the way she expected of herself or thought God expected of her.

She did her best to give love and joy to those around her, human, animal, friend or stranger. Not in a touchy-feely way or a showy way. But by being herself, by being present. By sharing of herself, of her hope, quietly... or loudly sometimes :)by continuing despite many adversities, by walking without fainting as the Bible says, as Jesus did.

My mother did not have a gratuitous bone in her body, nor did she have a mean one. She spoke from her heart. If she hurt your feelings, it was truly because she had no clue how her no nonsense, straightforward observations might sting on occasion. Wisdom tempered this quite a lot. But her directness and gentleness, thankfully, remained to her last breath ...long enough to finally ask for help and a visit from Father Grenon.

She abandoned herself to the day, each day, accepting what came her way. Open to adventure. She never turned down an opportunity for a visit, or a trip out of the house, ...except perhaps, more recently, any trips to the emergency room for fear of another admission.

To my knowledge, she never expressed a wish for God to take her a moment early, despite great struggles with physical pain and discomfort as well as the emotional and spiritual pain of shifting from an independent, active, "go getter" to being in chronic pain, dependent, mobility impaired, and, possibly worst of all for her, shut in. However painful those days might have been emotionally or physically, and there were many, she accepted the present moment. She had hope and saw hope where many would not.

Nancy Davis - December 31, 2018 at 07:20 PM

JM

Nancy, I have felt like I know you and now I know why!!! You are your mother's daughter. You are so kind and what a beautiful statement to your mother. I wish I could have meet her and feel like I have thru your words.Be well and my prayers are with you and your family. Be kind to yourself. Jeanette Monast

Jeanette Monast - December 31, 2018 at 09:48 PM

AG

Nancy, that is exquisite. I wish I had been able to do my mother justice as you have done here. Your words are wise, expressive and overflowing with love. You did good, Nancy.

Anna Marie Gutierrez - January 01, 2019 at 12:57 AM

MM

“ *Sending my heartfelt sympathies to Judy and family at this very sad time. Thoughts and prayers are with you as you remember all your mother's accomplishments, joyous times and everyday kindnesses. I only met her a few times but she was always gracious and warm and I am sure she will be missed beyond what words can express. I hope you are comforted by those wonderful memories of a life well lived and that happy memories can help ease your grief. Sending my condolences and love, Mary MacLeod*

Mary MacLeod - December 28, 2018 at 05:02 PM

PB

“ *RIP in Mrs. Davis. You always had a smile on your face and a kind word when I saw you. You will be missed by many people. My sympathies to Nancy, Judy, and your families. May your many happy memories being you comfort during this difficult and sad time.*

Pat Beland - December 22, 2018 at 09:47 AM

JM

“ Dorothy and I were first time Worthy Matrons in 1981. She was always gracious and unpretentious, always kind, and always ready for a good time. Only yesterday, I drove past the new Albion PO, and wondered how she was doing. I'm so sorry for your loss, but you know that she loved all of you more than anything. I'm sure she was loved just as much by you, and I'm sure she knew it. God bless.

Jan M McIntyre-Ba - December 22, 2018 at 09:01 AM