



Dorothy (Ast) Rutkowski

September 11, 1935 - June 23, 2020

Dorothy Helen Rutkowski, née Ast, 84, wife of Theodore Francis Rutkowski, passed away on June 23, 2020, at Seasons Hospice. She was fond of saying she lived a long and full life.

Dorothy was born September 11, 1935 in Jersey City, NJ. She had early memories of collecting tin cans in a wagon for the war effort during WWII, as well as soda bottles for the deposit money so she could go to the movies. As a child she loved dancing, learned some tap, and later liked to dance the Lindy and Jitterbug to big bands. She would often tell the story of the time she cut high school to go see Frank Sinatra at the Paramount Theater, where she danced in the aisles.

In the early 50s, she met Ted Rutkowski, the love of her life, at her after school job as a bookkeeper. They married in 1956, honeymooned in Miami, and started a family. Ted supported the family while he went to night school, and once he graduated college, his job took them to first Newark, DE, and later to West Chester and Phoenixville, PA. Dorothy was a contented stay at home mother, at times working part time in the school cafeteria, or at various bookkeeping jobs, once her children were in school. She was happiest at home, but would humor Ted when he got the urge to travel -- going on Windjammer cruises in the Caribbean, taking an RV trip with the whole family to the national parks in the Rockies, or flying to California for sightseeing.

Dorothy was a devoted grandmother, and delighted in hosting sleepovers with her grandchildren. She kept various stashes of toys for them, and kept a pool table for the teens in her basement. She enjoyed playing board games and doing puzzles with them, or just lending an ear to their joys and concerns. She diligently kept track of all their achievements and milestones, sending cards and presents regularly. For many years, she invited her family to stay with her for a week each summer in Cape May, NJ, a tradition she, and they, loved and looked forward to.

She was also a devout Catholic, and considered becoming a nun before meeting her husband. She was most recently a member of St. Anne's Parish in Phoenixville. For many years she was on the altar committee, where she lovingly ironed the linens, and she attended daily mass as long as she was able.

Dorothy is survived by her children: Michael T. Rutkowski (Maureen) of Swarthmore, PA, Christine Rutkowski of Baltimore, MD, Thomas Rutkowski (Mary Anne) of Phoenixville, PA, and James Rutkowski (Karen) of Birdsboro, PA; her grandchildren: Stephen, Mark, Megan, Nicole, Nicholas, Sarah, Christopher, Katharine, Rose, and Thomas; her great grandson, Finn Trinkaus; and her sister, Lillian Zuppa; as well as her many nieces, nephews and friends. She was preceded in death by her husband, and her brother, Eugene Ast.

Arrangements are being made through Campbell-Ennis-Klotzbach Funeral Home. A private burial service is planned for family only. A public memorial will be planned at a future time when it is appropriate.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be sent to:
St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter for Homeless Families

209 Emmett St.

Phoenixville, PA 19460

610-933-3097

<https://stmarysfs.org/donate/>

Cards of condolence for the family may be sent to:

Campbell-Ennis-Klotzbach Funeral Home

610 S. Main St.

Phoenixville, PA 19460

Cemetery Details

St. Ann Cemetery

502 Main St
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall

SR

“ *The earliest memories I have of my grandmother is tracing pictures at the kitchen table in Phoenixville. My grandmother would say, "Stephen, here is a pencil and tracin' paper...pick any picture that interest you out of these newspapers and or sports illustrated magazines and draw them...let's see your artistic wits."*

As the eldest grandchild I have the most memories of my grandmother. I consider myself to be the medium brain child of the Rutkowski adults and the witty nitty-gritty word mentor to my younger cousins.

Throughout life my grandmother suggestively told me how she always said individual prays for each family member everyday...she would say, "there are so many of youse now-a-days that my pray lists takes longer each and everyday...but it's well worth the time." "Just pray."

Puzzles, newspaper word games, and various educational mind teasers always appealed to my grandmother. Throughout my grandmothers life...her mind was sharp as a tack...her words were full of witty-knitting knack and 'Humor' was a word that she would say with a 'Jersey' girl act-cent...for "H" is pronounced like a "U" in the boomin' Jersey City days.

Ironically, I am a avid reader and collector of bargain buy books and strangely enough I have read the story of Sinatra and enjoy his musical tunes. My grandmother told me the Sinatra story many yeas ago...she claimed it was the only time she cut class...but we all know she did it for a Sinatra reason...he's the King of Swing who had a successful Academy Award thing!

Cape May has been a long time vacation destination for the Rutkowski family. For fifty plus years The historical town of Cape May which is known as the East Coast Victorian Home Capital has been a Point of many memorable Jersey shore vacations for myself and my witty cousins.

"God has a plan for each and everyone of youse." As Grandma would say.

God has a plan for each and everyone of us...for today I write this tribute on my grandmothers wall.

*With long-lasting-loving regards,
Steve
(S.J.R.)*

Stephen J. Rutkowski - July 14, 2020 at 11:09 PM

TM

“ *My deepest sympathy to the Rutkowski family. I so enjoyed Dot's regular participation at the Cardio-Pulmonary Rehab at Phoenixville Hospital. She made many friends in the rehab over the years. She was friendly and kind and supportive of others. She always had encouraging words for her rehab buddies. She will be dearly missed by the rehab staff and her many rehab friends.*

Dot was a true gem and a pleasure have known her. I consider myself blessed to have shared time and stories with her over the years! I will miss you, Dot !!

Terrie McKinley, Respiratory Therapist

Terrie McKinley - July 08, 2020 at 03:06 PM

JM

“ *Dearest Family, I keep all of you in my prayers through these difficult days following the passing of your mom. She was always kind and supportive throughout my life and I cherish the goodness of her heart that she fully shared. I pray you find peace knowing she is at rest in the arms of God.*

Joanne Miller - July 05, 2020 at 01:41 PM



“ *Dearest Cousins and family, I am saddened by the loss but Aunt Dot lived her life fully. She was a kind woman and always spoke fondly of everyone. She had an infectious laugh and I always liked my conversations with her. She always kept it real. She will be missed and she was loved by many*



Nancy D'Amato - July 05, 2020 at 01:21 PM

EO

“ *I'd like to send my deepest sympathy to Jim and the entire Rutkowski family. May your loving memories lift you up at this most difficult time.*
- Erin O'Brien

Erin O'Brien - June 30, 2020 at 06:00 PM

DG

“ *Sending my deepest sympathy to Jim and the whole family. You are in my thoughts.*
-Dan Green

Dan Green - June 30, 2020 at 10:27 AM

CK

“ Dear Rutkowski Family, I worked with Dottie at the Phoenixville Chamber of Commerce.
She was a wonderful person and a great friend. She and I always had "too much" fun on a regular basis. I loved her! I used to run into her here and there and it was always great to see her. Lately when I pass her house I wonder how my friend is doing?
She will be dearly missed but knowing she is a peace and with your dad, who I knew as well from the Chamber of Commerce, gives me get comfort. I am so blessed to have known her!

Truly,
Cindy Kelly

Cindy Kelly - June 29, 2020 at 01:58 PM

KH

“ I knew Dot from St. Ann's daily mass. She sat across the aisle from me and if I felt like changing my seat I said to myself 'no , I want to sit near Dot'. She was pleasant and always friendly. I came to find out that she was a very generous lady as well as devout Catholic. I missed her when she could no longer attend daily mass and occasionally I stayed in touch with her. Dot, just so you know, I was born in Jersey City, too - maybe that was our unknown connection. Your life and spirit were special. Kathy Hayde

Kathy Hayde - June 28, 2020 at 10:54 AM

SP

“ *Syl and I share our finest condolences on the passing of dear Dot. We recall a number of pleasant conversations with her outside St. Ann’s as we would enjoy morning walks along Main Street.*



Sal and Sylvia Katz of Phoenixville, PA - June 27, 2020 at 04:43 PM

PQ

“ *Dear Rutkowski family: My thoughts and prayers have been with you since I hear of Dot's passing. We shared many times talking before & after morning Mass at St. Ann Parish. Dot & my Mom, Joan Dakota had a special relationship also. I'm so glad I have these beautiful memories of her. May God' grace give you comfort during this sad time. Hug each other daily & say "I love you" because they mean so much! Thank you for sharing her with those who have come to know & love her.*



Patricia Quinn - June 27, 2020 at 08:28 AM