

Obituary

Born: Thursday, April 9, 2015

Died: Saturday, October 10, 2015

O'Brien, Ruth H. (Leishman)

Age 92, following a recent decline in her health, passed away peacefully, with her family at her side, on Saturday, October 10, 2015 at her home in Walpole, Massachusetts. She was born to the late Sarah J. (Buckle) and Charles A. Leishman on April 9, 1923 in Waltham, Massachusetts. She was predeceased by her husband, Clarence L. O'Brien (retired Colonel, U.S. Army) who died in 2000.

Ruth is survived by all of her children and their respective spouses:

C. Leonard and Lise (Hart) O'Brien of Naples, FL; Charles and Rebecca (Frigon) O'Brien of Jackman, ME; David and Christine (Moscaritolo) O'Brien of West Roxbury, MA; William and Roxanne (Smith) O'Brien of Mont Vernon, NH; Kenneth and Peggy (Masjoan) O'Brien of Brandon, FL; Patricia O'Brien and Diane Drew of Dunstable, MA; and Bruce and Virginia (O'Brien) Gutierrez of Walpole, MA. She is also survived by her sister Barbara (Leishman) Damoiseau and brother-in-law Robert Damoiseau of Lakeland, FL as well as her sister Jean (Leishman) Lyons of Nashua, NH. One of eight children, Ruth grew up in Waltham, Massachusetts and graduated from Waltham High School in 1940. Following graduation, she attended school and worked in Boston as a legal secretary until her marriage in 1943.

As the wife of a career Army officer and the mother of a growing family, Ruth quickly adapted to the challenges of raising a "military" family. Whether setting up a new household in post-WWII Japan, managing the family transfer to rural Georgia in the early days of the Civil Rights era or moving her children to a small town on the East German border during the height of the Cold War, Ruth embraced her role as the family's "chief operating officer" with enthusiasm and resolve. While her husband was often away attending to his military duties, she guided her children through the trials and tribulations of the latest relocation and taught them how to adapt to their new surroundings with the many differences in its cultures and customs.

Ruth's family and friends saw her as a renaissance woman. Throughout her life, her quest for knowledge and fascination with a changing world, never waned. She was a voracious reader, an astute follower of politics, an unabashed advocate for women's rights, and an unapologetic fan of the Bruins, Celtics, Patriots and Red Sox. Those that knew her well understood that if you want to debate current or historical events with Ruth, you better be up to speed on your facts because she most certainly would be.

As her children grew older, Ruth embarked on her second career, leveraging her administrative and organizing skills as well as life experiences into a number of successful employment endeavors. She was particularly proud of her role as Office Manager at Pearl Street House in Framingham, MA where she was instrumental in its growth from a small, local, residential program to that of a full service counseling and treatment facility for "at risk" children.

Ruth's love for her children was unquestionable. She was proud of their personal and professional achievements and, when asked, would be quick to talk about their latest accomplishments. As her children married, she developed close and lasting friendships with each of her new daughters and sons in law.

Her great passion and the source of never ending delight to her, however, was reserved for her grandchildren: Conor O'Brien of Silver Springs, MD; Ted O'Brien of Windham, ME; Heath Coro of AK; Shanna (Coro) Allen of Jackman, Maine; James O'Brien of New York City, NY; Kevin O'Brien of Stow, ME; Caitlin O'Brien of West Roxbury, MA; Megan (O'Brien) Griem of Arkansas; Colleen O'Brien of Washington; Brendan O'Brien of Maine; and Peter and Mark Gutierrez of Walpole, MA. A visit to her home reveals a gallery of photographs and mementos capturing the milestones of her grandchildren's lives and serves as testimony to the affection she held for each of them. Ruth will also be missed by her eight great grandchildren as well as her many nieces and nephews.

At the family's request, funeral and burial services will be private. A Memorial Service and Celebration of Life for Ruth will be held at a later date with family and friends being notified accordingly. The family wishes to thank all of those who cared for Ruth during her last illness and final days as well as for the many expressions of condolence and sympathy it has received. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to VNA Care Network and Hospice

Service Summary

Family to do services at later date

Location: - *Not available* -