



Isabel Evelyn Grasso

April 10, 1916 - March 7, 2016

Portsmouth - Isabel Evelyn Grasso, 99, formerly of Hampton, passed away peacefully at the Clipper Harbor Rehabilitation Facility in Portsmouth.

She was born in Boston, Massachusetts on April 10, 1916, to Mabel G. (Burrell) and Eugene M. Sweeney. Isabel lived in the Boston area through the fourth grade, and then moved to Littleton, New Hampshire with her mother, whose health necessitated living in clean mountain air. During her senior year in high school, Isabel's mother died and so Isabel moved back to Boston. She attended Boston Teachers College (now UMass Boston) and graduated sixth in her class in June 1941. She double-majored in English and French and loved speaking French, whenever the opportunity arose, throughout her life.

In January 1941, Isabel married James Vincent Grasso and this marriage continued until Jim's death in April 1998. They had three children – Lynne in 1943, Nance in 1944, and Jim in 1947. They moved to several locations around the United States, dictated by Jim's service in the U.S. Army and subsequent civilian career.

Although Isabel's dream was to teach French, at the time of her graduation married women were not allowed to teach in the Boston school system. She worked for several years at Draper Brothers in Canton, Massachusetts, and several more at the Mercedes Benz Corporate Headquarters in Montvale, New Jersey. She was an active volunteer at the Jenks Senior Center in Winchester, Massachusetts.

Isabel and Jim retired to the Hampton area and she found her true home back in New Hampshire. She was a reporter and columnist for local Hampton newspapers for many years, until her retirement in her mid-80s.

She was a member of the First Congregational Church in Hampton, and a volunteer and participant in the Hampton Meals on Wheels. She found great pleasure and support from her friends in these two groups.

Isabel loved words – reading, writing, and playing Scrabble. She wrote hundreds of poems, many of which were published in local newspapers. Her work was included in “Before the Amen: Creative Resources for Worship“ and “The Mountains I Raise: A Garnering in Prose and Verse,” as well as other poetry collections. Isabel was dubbed Hampton’s “Unofficial Poetess-Laureate.”

Isabel also loved cats, and had many of them throughout her lifetime. At one time she had seven cats, because one of her two cats had five kittens and each was loved and named as it was born, and certainly not given away! Her last and most loved cats were Tiger, and siblings Sequoia and Sebastian.

But most of all, Isabel loved her children. She is survived by Lynne (Joel) Trussell of Durham, North Carolina, Nance (Frank) Hughes of Santa Barbara, California, and Jim (Lois) Grasso of Parker, Colorado. In addition, she is survived by two grandchildren – Teri Grasso (Brandon Kerns) of Denver, Colorado, and Brian (Claire) Karasek of Pittsboro, North Carolina – and three great-grandchildren – Logan, Liam, and Sadie Kerns of Denver, Colorado. Isabel also is survived by several nieces and their families, primarily in Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Texas, and one in Denmark.

Visitation will be from 2:00 to 4:00 pm on Friday, April 8, 2016 in the Remick & Gendron Funeral Home - Crematory, 811 Lafayette Rd., Hampton. Isabel’s memorial service and celebration of her life will be held at 10:30 am on Saturday, April 9, at the First Congregational Church of Hampton, 127 Winnacunnet Rd., Hampton, followed by a luncheon at the church. Family and friends are respectfully invited. Burial will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the First Congregational Church.

Cemetery

Events

High Street Cemetery

100 High Street
Hampton, NH,

APR 8 **Visitation** 02:00PM - 04:00PM

Remick & Gendron Funeral Home - Crematory
811 Lafayette Road ·, Hampton, NH, US, 03842

APR 9 **Memorial Service** 10:30AM

First Congregational Church
127 Winnacunnet Road, Hampton, NH, US, 03842

Comments



“ I am so sorry to hear of Isabel's passing. I had met her through the Lane Memorial Library and what wonderful, special, lovely lady she was. I loved reading her poetry and many times she would make an extra copy at the copy machine and give it to me. I had an Easter card ready to send out to her when I read it in the newspaper. She was truly remarkable!

Joanne Mulready

Joanne Mulready - April 01, 2016 at 02:58 PM



“ Isabelle, is the most sweetest and loving woman.. everytime she came for an appt she would write me a poem and tell me each time how beautiful I was. I so much loved seeing her. Such a sweetheart!!! Miss You Sandra

Sandra Freeman-Nemis - March 18, 2016 at 11:40 AM



“ Isabel, my friend, whom I will miss. We had a lot in common... both graduates of UMass Boston. Isabel graduated in 1941 and I graduated in 1992--we were both English Majors! She used to say I was her youngest friend, and I used to reply that she was my oldest friend. I so enjoyed our talks about books, poetry, art, photography and our love of cats. I loved playing Scrabble with her--she won. I will miss seeing her in her blue coat and her beautiful scarf with her blue eyes sparkling in excitement over a poem she just finished writing. A poem that I would have the pleasure to read. When the world loses an amazing person like Isabel Grasso, there certainly is a void, and it is felt by everyone who was fortunate enough to know and love that person.

God Bless you Isabel. Heaven just received the most wonderful person. Love you.

Your friend,
Melanie LeBlanc

Melanie LeBlanc - March 17, 2016 at 08:14 PM



“ Thank you, Melanie. I am so glad we had a chance to meet recently. You and my mother had so much in common! I look forward to seeing you and meeting your husband next month.

LYNNE TRUSSELL - March 22, 2016 at 03:06 PM



“ A true woman of words! She was ever smiling and loved to talk politics, poetry, and life.

She will be vert much missed! Susan & Dennis Kepner

Susan & Dennis Kepner - March 14, 2016 at 02:06 PM



“ A true honor to have been able to get to know Isabel - her kindness, intelligence and graceful strength will continue to be a positive influence in my life.



Janet Smillie - March 13, 2016 at 01:23 PM



“ Dear Isabel I will truly miss seeing you come in to Hoatys. Rest in peace beautiful lady!!

Terri Provencher - March 09, 2016 at 08:33 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



John Hirtle - March 09, 2016 at 08:14 AM



“ I had the pleasure and honor of knowing Isabel Grasso during my time as Production Manager of the Atlantic News (1995-2007) where she was one of our most honest dependable writers. Granted, what she wrote about in the schools and senior meetings was not the earth-shattering stories the mainstream media hunts down, but as a community paper it was exactly what people wanted to read about. Something other than the horror and sadness in the world at large, and something local, positive, and upbeat. Isabel excelled at that.

More than once I would find her coming up the stairs to the production room, quiet as a mouse, worried to death that she was interrupting something important. And I would always assure her that she wasn't. In fact, it was a pleasure to have her interrupt and give us a break in our routine. We would review the stories, and her photos, and we would see her off. Even after she "retired" she would come in now and again with a story - typed on that classic parchment style typewriter paper, as she never did get a computer - or a photo taken with her trusty old film camera.

Like everyone, over time she slowed down. Her hearing may not have been as good, and many times I would escort her down the narrow stairs to make sure she got off in her car, but there was certainly no stopping her, and there was always this youthful twinkle in her eyes and an appreciative smile that she had that brightened up the room. Looking through my files of the Atlantic News, I note she still sent in photos and stories, even long after she "retired".

I was saddened to hear of her passing before her 100th birthday; but she had a remarkable run and a remarkable life, and I am sure she is sharing all those adventures with friends and family who passed ahead of her right now.

- John Hirtle

John Hirtle - March 09, 2016 at 08:12 AM



“ Thank you for your kind words for my mother! She loved her years of being a reporter for the Atlantic News.

LYNNE TRUSSELL - March 10, 2016 at 09:21 PM



“ Gerry Wilbur lit a candle in memory of Isabel Evelyn Grasso



Gerry Wilbur - March 09, 2016 at 06:19 AM



“ I know how Isabel Grasso loved her cats. Very special was Tommy, a 14 pound tabby, who was a first class snuggler. Lynne was my first friend in Stoughton, and Mrs. Grasso was the first grown-up whose name I knew when my family moved from Dorchester to Stoughton.

My warmest thoughts are with Lynne, Nance, and Jim, and their families.
Michele Gerrig Newmark (Shelly from 41 Donald Road)

Michele Gerrig Newmark - March 08, 2016 at 04:39 PM



“ Thanks, Michele! That move to Stoughton in 1955 was the start of a long friendship!

LYNNE TRUSSELL - March 11, 2016 at 08:35 AM