



Alice Byrnes Coombs

March 22, 1928 - June 6, 2020

Alice Ruth Byrnes Coombs went to be with the Lord on June 6, 2020. She was born on March 22, 1928 to Louise Rogers Byrnes and Peter John Brynes. She was predeceased by her loving husband of 73 years, Richard H. Coombs, who passed on March 30 of this year. They are survived by three sons and their wives. David (Linda) of Arkansas, Richard (Jody) of North Carolina, and Timothy (Kathy) of New York. She adored all of her grandchildren. Tracey (Steven) Marek, Christopher (Cheri), Brandon (Jessica), Garrett (Natalie), Keith (Jess), and Kyle. Also, by great grandchildren Seth, Alice, Annie, Rachel, Drew, Harper, Penelope, and another on the way. Alice is also survived by her best friend and sister Virginia "Ginger." They are predeceased by brothers Robert, James, Richard "Micky", Raymond, Cornelius "Sonny", Terence "Terry" and sisters Arlene and Carol. Alice was born on the west side of Manhattan where she had a challenging childhood. Being the oldest of 10 she was responsible with helping to care for her younger siblings. Always a strong student Alice graduated from Haaren High School at the age of 16. That allowed her the opportunity to attend Sterling College in Kansas for one semester. Unfortunately, finances would prevent her from continuing her education there. Later, in her early 50's, Alice returned to school and graduated with honors, from Nassau Community College with an Associates Degree. When Rich returned from WWII, they married in 1946, and lived in their first apartment in the Bronx. They had fond memories of playing checkers and splitting a bottle of soda on "tar beach"

(roof top). They would move to Ozone Park and eventually to East Meadow, NY where they purchased their first home where they raised their three sons. In retirement they spent 25 fun filled years in Palm Coast and Port Orange, Florida before moving to Hot Springs Village, Arkansas. Alice would work most of her adult life. In her early years she ushered on Broadway where she developed her love of theater. Later she worked as a secretary at Republic Aviation and from there she became a medical secretary at Winthrop University (Nassau) Hospital where she worked for over twenty years in the special hematology department. Despite the adversities Alice faced in her early childhood, she did not allow them to define her as a person. She was determined to provide a great home life for her family. To that end, Alice and Rich worked hard and made many sacrifices over the years for their sons. Alice was loved by everyone who met her. She was a humble servant who put everyone else's needs before her own. She was a dedicated Christian throughout her life even serving as a Deacon for many years. Her three greatest past-times were attending Broadway musicals, playing Scrabble and summer weekends spent at the beach. And, it goes without saying, her baked beans, crumb cakes and Christmas cookies were always a big hit. Alice was a great hostess and everyone was welcomed in their home. When Alice and Rich came to the Good Sam's Center she was known as "speedy" for her fast gait. Later, when she went into long-term care she became known as "smiley" from her caregivers for her upbeat spirit. Anyone choosing to honor Alice's memory may make a donation in her name to the Good Samaritan Society, Hot Springs Village, AR, or to Trinity Presbyterian Church, Scotia, NY.

Tribute Wall

JM

“ Aunt Alice was a very special person. Aunt Alice and Uncle Rich were always there for the Mulligans after my Dad passed away. I will always treasure those long days at Robert Moses State Park and playing ping pong in their basement. Lori, Cara and I had the opportunity to visit with them in Florida for a few times and were happy to see how much they were enjoying retirement. Aunt Alice was a very bright and perceptive person who always was a pleasure to interact with. God bless her and I feel sorry for those in heaven who have to play her in Scrabble.

John Mulligan - June 18, 2020 at 10:40 AM

JK

“ I can remember so clearly , 40 plus years ago Aunt Alice’s 50th birthday party. It was held at Aunt Eleanor’s apartment on the Grand Concourse. She and I arrived at the same time to the apartment and as we stood at the door about to enter, I recall the expression on her face and the overwhelming feeling she was having about turning 50. She was talking about how she could’ve believe she was so old! Looking back now 50 seems so young, and she was certainly looking very good at 50. I guess back then 50 was a lot older than it is today, ha! I will miss my forever young Aunt Alice, and think of her and Uncle Rich, their souls united again in the afterlife🙏🙏. Love, Janny

janet knizak - June 11, 2020 at 05:03 PM

DC

Thanks Janny for your kind words and memory. Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:06 AM

TT

“ I am sorry to hear of Alice's passing so soon after Uncle Rich. But, it makes sense that they would remain together forever. It may be forgotten by most, but Alice was responsible for finding the college I attended. I am not sure anyone else in the family knew how to go about searching for a school at the time. None of us had ever been to college! She sent a short list of Catholic colleges and I ultimately attended Saint Francis in Loretto, Pennsylvania, a choice that changed my life for the better. She was always thoughtful and cared about her family, all of the huge tribe we became. My memories of Alice are all pleasant ones. Love to all. Tom Tarnowsky

Tom Tarnowsky - June 09, 2020 at 10:32 PM

DC

I had never heard that story Tom. Thanks for sharing it. She always enjoyed helping anyone with anything. She loved helping everyone. Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:10 AM

JH

“ So many fun memories like a trip to Catskill Game Farm , holidays/vacations in East Meadow, or brushing my hair while quietly talking and making 7-yr old 8th child feel really special. But she was a gal well ahead of her time, being honestly diverse in the 1970s, in lovingly welcoming a contingent of Puerto Ricans into her home when she hosted my wedding shower. Go Alice, make strides in heaven!



Jeanie Coombs Hernandez - June 09, 2020 at 08:35 PM

DC

Jean, what a great story about Alice/Mom. I honestly do not remember that shower, probably because I was not invited. I was probably given "movie money" to make myself scarce for a few hours! She had a way to make those around feel special about themselves. Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:16 AM

“ I only know snippets about Grandma's past, but I remember being shocked to learn that she effectively raised her many younger siblings in a Depression-era Manhattan apartment (not so far or different from the one I am in now). She did not like to talk about it much and as I heard details throughout my teenage years I struggled to reconcile that story with the kind and gentle woman who taught me to play Scrabble, poolside in Port Orange. Upon reflection, the strength and steadfastness of love she showed as a teen in New York were just as apparent through the 28 and a half years that I knew her.

She was the kind of grandmother who would stuff you full of food the minute she saw you and make sure to send you home with as much as she could, even if that meant carrying an entire leftover turkey onto a your flight home from Thanksgiving in Florida. And she was a force on the Scrabble board. Grandma would crisscross the board with five and six-letter words, relying on her memory bank of two- and three-letter words to place them flush against already-laid tiles and regularly score north of thirty points. She'd gloat for a moment after each win before teaching me another trick or too until after years of trying, I squeaked out a win. And thankfully, when I asked her at four years old why the skin kept flapping under her arm while she and Pop Pop blew out the candles on her 60th anniversary cake, I learned she had a wonderful sense of humor.

As she aged, her memory started to go. When I last saw her in March 2019, she could not stuff you full of food because she did not cook. She could still hold her own on the Scrabble board, but she was not the wordsmith that taught me two decades ago. But that sense of humor was still there, rooted in the love she had for each one of us lucky ones that got to call her family. Thankfully though, I had learned some tact in 23 years, motivated in large part by sheer embarrassment.

I do not know if we get to choose the day we go. But if we do, it'd be just like her to choose June 6th to be with Pop Pop on the 76th

anniversary of one of the toughest days of his life. In a few days though, I am sure she'll be roasting him in Scrabble -- out of love, of course, steadfast and strong.

Kyle Coombs - June 09, 2020 at 05:36 PM

DC

What great memories Kyle, thanks for posting. She loved you very much. One day I have a good Scrabble story to share with you. Ol' Uncle Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:22 AM

JC

“*Your mother was a classy, compassionate, humble and intelligent woman. My condolences to her whole family as I know this is a very sad time for them and they will miss Alice dearly. Alice had a wonderful life, wonderful children, daughter-in-laws and grandchildren. Alice lived a beautiful long life with her husband Richard traveling the world. I'm sure thinking of all the good she was and the good married life she had makes this difficult time a little easier. I know D day was an important day to Alice knowing Richard survived this day. This is the day she went home to our Lord to also be home with her husband. Aunt Alice and Uncle Richard may you rest in peace. Love, Janet Collins*

Janet L Collins - June 09, 2020 at 05:36 PM

DC

What a beautiful tribute Janet. Thank-you so much. Love, Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:25 AM

GE

“ One of my first memories is staying in East Meadow with Jay when my mom was giving birth to Jackie. About 60 years to the day when I do the math. You always welcomed us with warmth and a smile, even when “the marauding Mulligans “ made a complete mess of Tim’s toys. Take care of Uncle Rich as you always have. -Gerry Mulligan

Gerry - June 09, 2020 at 10:57 AM

DC

Gerry you always bring a smile to my face. My toys were probably hidden under my bed! Mom loved the Mulligan's, especially your Dad/Uncle Jack, her fellow out-law! Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:29 AM

VF

“ My sister Alice has been such a part of my life, and when I got Married and had children, she became part of their lives. Some of their best memories are of the times spent with Aunt Alice and Uncle Rich. I will miss my sister forever.

virginia ginger florio - June 08, 2020 at 07:13 PM

DC

Aunt Ginger, words can not describe how much Alice/Mom loved you and your whole family. Over her last few years, the mere mention of your name to her, would make her face break into a big smile. One day you two will be together again. Love, Dick

Dick Coombs - June 13, 2020 at 12:33 AM