



Grace Fitzsimmons

May 8, 1920 - April 26, 2020

Heishman Funeral Home Inc. sends condolences to the family of Grace Fitzsimmons.

Grace Fitzsimmons, of Woodstock, VA, passed away peacefully on April 26, 2020, two weeks shy of her 100th birthday, surrounded by her loving family. Born in Ludlow, MA, May 8, 1920. She was the eldest child of a large Portuguese family. She was a 1938 graduate of Ludlow High School and Valedictorian of her class. She was an avid scholar and won first prize in the Massachusetts State Debate competition. After high school she moved to Washington D.C. and was employed by the United States Army Command as an interpreter and later worked in the Brazilian Embassy as a translator and secretary for the U.S. Government and for Brazilian Military Attaché. Grace graduated from George Washington University and received department high honors graduating Magna Cum Laude, and was the first graduating class to receive a B.A. in American Thought and Civilization-- also known today as American Studies. While attending George Washington University, Grace met her husband Jim Fitzsimmons while crossing the street on her way to class. They were married in 1947 and settled in Alexandria, VA where she became a high school English and History teacher in Fairfax County at Groveton High School for over 23 years. Grace was a voracious reader, lover of poetry, theater, and classical music. She would often take the train to New York City to see opera performances at the Metropolitan Opera House. She had a thirst for knowledge, was a true patron of the arts, loved discussing politics and had a passion for education. Even in her later years you could find her still in the classroom attending courses through the Lifelong Learning Institute. Grace is survived by her brother James (Jimmy) Guerra of Port St. Lucy, FL; her son, James A. Fitzsimmons and his wife, Annette LaRocque Fitzsimmons of Woodstock, VA and their four children and one very cherished great-grandchild: Margot Fitzsimmons of Oakland, CA; Rachel Fitzsimmons and great-grandson, Adrian Ward of Woodstock, VA; Christian Fitzsimmons and his wife Maggie of Athens, GA; and Sarah Grace Fitzsimmons of Fairfax, VA. She was also the proud aunt of 24 nieces and nephews and many great-nieces and nephews. Grace was also preceded in death by her beloved husband Jim Fitzsimmons with whom she was married for 50 years until his death in 1997. Her final resting place will be at Arlington National Cemetery with her husband. A special thanks to

Pine Meadow Assisted Living for taking such loving care of Grace in the final year of her life. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Grace's memory to the Woodstock Public Library.

Comments



“ Mrs. Fitzsimmons was my English teacher for my freshman year at Groveton High School and I remember her as a very kind and excellent teacher. She was one of the best teachers at Groveton and I was fortunate to have had her as one of my teachers. My condolences to the entire Fitzsimmons family for their loss.

Art Orton

Art Orton - May 14, 2020 at 10:10 AM



“ Ms fitsimmons was my most favorite teacher at ghs i loved going to her class and i loved her as a person and someone i could always talk to.my condolences to her family with prayers of comfort sent.

Linda Warren(Dinger) - May 13, 2020 at 10:36 PM



“ Mrs. Fitzsimmons was my favorite teacher at Groveton. She also sponsored the Future Nurses club, and was so kind to us all. She and her husband hosted a wonderful cookout for us. I remember her kindness and her sweet smile. My condolences for your loss.

Ginny (Rossheim) Byer - May 13, 2020 at 02:15 PM



“ I had the privilege of sharing a dinner table with Grace for several years here at VMRC. What a great lady! We became close friends and had many good times together in our Poetry Read group and other activities. I miss her warmth and her smile. My deepest and most heartfelt sympathies to her family and other loved ones. Lee Watson (Ms) Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Lee Watson (Ms) - May 02, 2020 at 01:53 PM



“ condolences/ Grace Fitzsimmons

Roberta McCrowell <bertamc@gmail.com>
12:38 PM (16 minutes ago)
to www.valleyfs

Dear Family/friends of Grace,

I moved into VMRC in 2012 and was most privileged to live across the hall from Grace. Although she was married around the time I was born, I have been amazed at how much I enjoyed her as a friend and am still learning as I think about the times we had together. Although not the same time period, we had a few things in common such as - DC, Alexandria, teaching school in Fairfax,. trips to NY etc. Our love for family, reading, and arts etc. gave us some fun common ground for sharing. I really enjoyed seeing her great/grand children and discussing pictures as they grew. I still smile at my memory of puppet show! I was very fond of Sara Grace because although busy with pageants, she made time to frequently visit her BELOVED Grace. I remember clearly watching across Detwiler auditorium at Grace's face as Sarah Grace gave us a concert! Awesome night I hope to never to forget.

I am writing with Deepest Sympathy for your loss! I too have missed her but consider every memory and every tear, as a celebration of a life well lived and a friend well loved!! I look forward to seeing Grace again in heaven and have begun to view life in terms of the many eternal "hellos" ahead of me. On this side of heaven-Sarah Grace,if you are ever this way, a visit from you would be awesome!!

Love
Roberta McCrowell
2Corinthians1:3

berta McCrowell - May 02, 2020 at 01:02 PM



“ Jim & Annette -- Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Grace was a blessing to so many -- in many different circles. She blessed our lives throughout the years with thoughtful cards and kind notes; she had a wonderful way with words! It was always a treat to see you, as well, when you came to visit at Park Gables. God's Blessings to you and your family . . .

Rich & Jen Yoder - Dayton, VA

Rich & Jen Yoder - April 30, 2020 at 12:20 PM



“ I want to express to the entire Fitzsimmons family my heartfelt sympathy. I was saddened to hear of your great loss. Grace was a grand lady with a kind smile. May the love of family and friends comfort and strengthen in the days to come.

Karen Leeth Hoadley

Karen Leeth Hoadley - April 30, 2020 at 11:17 AM



“ Ms. Grace was a beautiful lady inside and out . She put a smile on my face every time I spent time with her. You will be forever missed and loved by so many. RIP Grace

Angela leal - April 29, 2020 at 06:50 PM



“ I remember Grace with fondness. She lived here at VMRC with us. My sympathies to her family who she was very proud of. Joyce Eshleman

Joyce Eshleman - April 29, 2020 at 06:40 PM



“ I met Ms. Grace a year ago when she came to live at Pine Meadows. We grew very close in the short time she was with us. She was teaching me portugese and we both would get a laugh listening to me speak it. We all loved her very much and she will always hold a special place in my heart. I loved her so much. I'm already missing her. Fly high Ms. Grace

Dana Hargrove - April 29, 2020 at 03:15 PM



“ Mrs. Fitzsimmons was my freshman English teacher at Groveton High School. She was a wonderful teacher, and made me decide that I, too, wanted to become a teacher and teach high school English. That career goal didn't last, but her influence on my life did. I still know how to diagram a sentence, not to split an infinitive, and to avoid dangling participles at all costs. I hope her family knows that she was special to all of us who were lucky enough to be in her classes.

Betsy Sprouse - April 29, 2020 at 11:26 AM