



Belmira C. Sardinha

December 26, 1921 - March 27, 2017

Belmira C. Sardinha passed peacefully with her attentive family close by at The Pavilion at Jupiter Medical Center on Monday, March 27, 2017. She was born in River Point, West Warwick, Rhode Island, to Manuel and Genoveva De Castro. At the age of 12 her family moved to Madeira Island, Portugal. There she excelled in school, learning to speak five languages: English, Portuguese, French, Spanish, Latin, and a little German. Myra, as she was known, is survived by: her children Marie Engelman (husband Dave), Frank Sardinha, Jr., Grace Grenfell (husband Robert), Julie Folden (husband Gary); grandchildren Elysa Engelman (husband Hart Kelley), Matthew Engelman (wife Charlotte), Alison Finocchiaro (husband James), Babette Dickson (husband Brandon), Frank Sardinha III, Clayton Folden, and Christopher Sardinha; great-grandchildren Baxter, Harper, Carter, Katlynn, Liliana, Maxwell, Belleami, and Brinley; sisters-in-law Teresa Sardinha Roajas and Gabriela Rodrigues; brothers-in-law Fernando Sardinha and Manuel Rodrigues, and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

After completing her second year of college in Madeira, Myra returned to the United States in the early 1940's to continue her education in New York City. She soon joined the war effort by working as a censor-translator with her cousin, Aldora Coombs, at The Department of War Information. It was at this time that she met a young handsome sailor, Frank Sardinha, who was also born in this country but raised in Madeira. After the war and marriage to Frank she settled in Port Washington, New York, where Frank continued his carpentry trade and their four children were born.

Life took a new turn when, in 1956, she and Frank decided to follow Frank's brother Eddie and sister-in-law Teresa to Florida with hopes of finding a warmer climate where Frank could continue his carpentry and provide for his family. Thus, with a '52 baby blue Chevy Bel Air convertible, filled with four children and a dog, followed by a two-ton truck stuffed with all their earthly possessions, they drove to Florida, settling in Jupiter.

Frank quickly established himself as a general contractor by building three houses off Loxahatchee Drive. Myra soon became Jupiter's first school-crossing guard. With her petit

5'2" frame, in her brown uniform, holding a 3-foot stick with an 18-inch red banner, she could be seen daily directing cars and trucks as children crossed a two-lane Indiantown Road and Loxahatchee Drive.

A year later, Myra became secretary to Jupiter mayor Levi Clark. After his term ended she became the first secretary to Jupiter's Chamber of Commerce and Welcome Center under Anna Minear. Meanwhile, with news of the arrival of Pratt and Whitney west of Jupiter, Frank joined his brother Eddie and sister-in-law Teresa in building and running a restaurant called "Frank and Eddie's" at the corner of Indiantown Road and Loxahatchee Drive.

During these early years Myra joined the American Legion Auxiliary where she became a life member. She and Frank became one of the first Jupiter families that established St. Jude's Mission, with monthly masses at the Civic Center, then weekly masses at Salhaven (present-day Jonathan's Landing), and finally establishing St. Jude's Roman Catholic Church.

A number of years later Frank, Myra, Eddie and Teresa sold the restaurant. Frank returned to construction and Myra became secretary to land surveyors Byrd and Payne. It was here she worked with Jim Payne and Jim O'Brien.

With an economic downturn and slow housing market in the 60's Frank repurchased "Frank and Eddie's", now re-named "The Colony Restaurant." The restaurant became a favorite lunch spot for Jupiter High seniors. It was also a spot where it was not unusual to find an occasional high-school student enjoying a soda when they should have been in class. Students always knew that nothing would be said by either Frank or Myra. Myra spent many long days helping serve breakfast and dinner at the restaurant while working the in-between hours at Byrd and Payne.

Once the economy improved, Frank once again sold the restaurant and returned to his love of building houses. Myra took a position as school secretary at Jupiter Elementary and High School. There she worked under wonderful principals such as Victor Schott and Dr. Carmen Archetti.

With Frank's semi-retirement from construction and a shared desire to travel, Myra soon retired from Jupiter Elementary School. She and Frank returned to Madeira, re-establishing family bonds and friendships. They soon purchased a condo in Funchal, Madeira, and spent six months a year there and six months in Jupiter until Frank's passing in 1999. They were founding members of The Portuguese American Cultural Society of

Palm Beach, where Frank built much of the building and Myra taught Portuguese and culture classes.

In the years that followed Frank's death, Myra spent time visiting her children and returning to Madeira to enjoy its beautiful climate and scenery.

Myra will forever be loved, respected, and cherished by those who survive her.

A Visitation will be held on Friday, March 31st from 2pm-4pm and also from 6pm-8pm at Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, 250 Center St., Jupiter, FL. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, April 1st at 10am at St. Jude Catholic Church, 204 U.S. 1, Tequesta, FL

Donations may be made in her name to:

- 1) American Legion Auxiliary Unit 271, 775 N. US Hwy. 1, Tequesta, FL 33469
- 2) Hospice of Palm Beach County at the Jupiter Pavilion, 5300 East Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33407
- 3) Portuguese American Cultural Society of Palm Beach County, 13265 Okeechobee Blvd., Loxahatchee, FL. 33470

Comments



“ Thank you for your condolences and love for a very special person- an inspiration to many, a kind and gentle soul who always took an interest in others, and gave of herself so willingly-we miss her. Julie S. Folden

A friend - May 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Gracie and family, So sorry to hear about your mom. She was a lovely lady. We were always happy to see her. What an interesting life she had. Love,Dianne and Kelli.

A friend - April 01, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Mrs. Sardinha was one of the kindness, sweetest people I ever knew. I will always remember her bright smile and her kind and caring words. We here on earth that knew her will be sad, but heaven shall rejoice.

Doug & Flo Blankenship - Jupiter, FL - Family Friend - March 31, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Our most sincere condolences. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Susana DeCastro Vils - Family - March 30, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Marie, Frank, Grace, and Julie, Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this time of sorrow. We have so many fond memories with Aunt Belmira. she will be missed. May she rest in peace.

Maribel Furgiuele - Palm Beach Gardens, FL - Family - March 30, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ My heart is heavy for your loss. Belmira is a beautiful name for such a beautiful lady. I'm happy I had the pleasure to meet her.Keira

Keira Cantrell - St. Petersburg, FL - Family Friend - March 30, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Beautiful Obituary! I felt like I knew her personally reading about her full life.My deepest of sympathy to Juan, Magaly and whole family. May lovely memories bring all comfort.Cynthia

Cynthia Grantham - Delray, FL - Family Friend - March 30, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Rest in God's peace Aunt Myra. You will be missed by many.

Patricia Sardinha-Salamon - Jupiter, FL - Family - March 29, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Miss you, may you rest in peace in Jesus' arms

Teresa Sardinha-Rojas - Greenwood, AR - Family - March 29, 2017 at 12:00 AM