



Mary L. Snelson

APR 15, 1926 - SEP 11, 2018



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Mary Louise Henson Snelson died peacefully in her sleep on September 11, 2018, finally succumbing to the Parkinson's disease that she battled for twenty years. Mary Lou was a lifelong resident of Decatur. She loved Decatur, and all of her friends and family. She devoted her life to her family and to the service of the Decatur community, and enjoyed a long life doing just that.

Mary Louise Henson was born on April 15, 1926, at St. Mary's Hospital to Eva Young Henson and James Elmore Henson. She graduated from Stephen Decatur High School, and from Millikin University, where she met the love of her life, Rodger Kenneth Snelson. They married in 1950, and raised six children in Decatur: Ann Sundby (George) of San Francisco; Rodger (Sally) of Randolph, New Jersey; Sarah Armstrong (Richard) of St. Paul; Elizabeth (Brett Gemlo) of St. Paul; Priscilla (Chris Schroth) of Decatur; James (Melissa) of Minnetonka, Minnesota.

Mary Lou received her master's degree in Education and Instructional Media from Eastern Illinois University, worked for the Decatur Public Library, where she started in the Bookmobile, and became a librarian for 7 years in the Niantic Harristown schools. After 16 years serving the children of the Decatur Public School system as a librarian, including many years at Durfee school, she returned to the reference desk at DPL and then volunteered for hundreds of hours sorting books for the annual book sale alongside longtime friends Ann Seidman and Marian Woyna.

Mary Lou touched so many people. She was the perennial volunteer to all things Decatur. She was a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority at Millikin, she served on St. Mary's Hospital Auxiliary, she was a member of the Board of the James Millikin Homestead and the Macon County Historical Society. She was a member of the Anna Millikin Study Group. She and Rodger worked with NWRAPS restoring houses in the West End. She was a faithful member of St. James Catholic Church, attending Mass there every Sunday until she no longer could, and volunteering in



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every capacity.

She loved Wednesday night dinners with family and friends at Doherty's, Friday evenings at Jimmy Ryan's, Saturday lunches with the ladies, Sunday morning brunch after Mass at Lock Stock.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Rodger; her son-in-law Richard Armstrong, her brother-in-law Lawrence Peters, and her sister-in-law Charlene Snelson.

She is survived by her sisters Clara Peters and Eva Luckenbill (Lawrence); brother-in-law Keith Snelson; her six children and their spouses; nine grandchildren: Alex and Matt (Michelle) Sundby, Rebecca and Stephen Snelson; Sarah Gemlo Long-Leather, Cameron and Eva Gemlo; Sam and Charlie Snelson; her four-month-old great-grandson Jordan; and many nieces and nephews.

Her family is grateful for the constant support and loving care Mary Lou received from the staff at Hickory Point Christian Village for the last 3 years, and the steadfast love from her sister Soupy and brother-in-law Larry, and cousin Marilyn throughout her illness.

Mass of Christian Burial will be Saturday, September 22, at 10 a.m. at St. James Catholic Church. Visitation will be Friday, September 21, from 5 – 7 p.m. at Moran & Goebel Funeral Home, 2801 N. Monroe. Burial will be in Greenwood Cemetery. Memorials may be made in her name to St. James Catholic Church, James Millikin Homestead, Macon County Historical Society, or the History Room of the Decatur Public Library.



Tribute Wall

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JB

Joyce Brumaster posted:

Mary L Snelson was a special person in my life and I am so pleased when I returned 2013 with a friend Judy Cassel Robinson of Florida for her 1953 DHS class reunion we visited her.

October 2 at 4:38 PM

CO

Christine Oyer posted:

Deepest sympathy to the family of Lou Snelson. During my first year as a school librarian in Decatur, Lou was assigned as my mentor, and I spent a day shadowing her, as well as staying in touch when I had questions. She had so many down-to-earth suggestions, and I enjoyed being her colleague for the rest of her time in Decatur Public Schools. My thoughts are with you in your loss.

September 24 at 9:05 AM

BW

Betty V Wheatley posted:

I am so sorry I can't attend Lou's service, but send my sincere sympathy to her family. She and Roger go back a lot of years as old friend!

September 22 at 1:08 PM

PH

Patrice Hunt posted:

Family of Mary Lou: My husband and I taught at Niantic Harristown with Mary Lou for several years and we became fast friends. What a lovely lady she was, so full of grace!! We had not seen her for many years but will hold her in our hearts always. May the Divine Healing Presence comfort you at this time.

September 15 at 3:40 AM

CW

Cynthia Warner posted:

Priscilla I'm so sorry for the loss of your mom. You have lots of great memories to hold close to your heart. I'm sorry I can't make it to her celebration of life but I am thinking of you all.

September 14 at 5:28 AM



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Mary Jo Vail Comerford posted:

Lou was a dear friend. Mary Jo Comerford

September 13 at 2:58 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Mary by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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