



Barbara A. McGowan

December 12, 1931 - November 19, 2020

Barbara Anne (nee Roggenbuck), age 88, died November 19 at home surrounded by loved ones. Dear wife the late Francis A. McGowan to whom she was married for 62 years; beloved mother of Michael (Kelly) McGowan of Ann Arbor, MI, Jane Benskey of Brighton, MI, Patrick McGowan, Thomas McGowan and Kathleen (Rob) Bandfield, all of Howell, MI and the late Brigit McGowan; cherished grandmother of 13 and great-grandmother of 10. Barbara was preceded in death by siblings Will Roggenbuck, Dick Roggenbuck, Carson (Pat) Shirley and wife, Doris and Joan Slayden and husband, Ken.

Born on December 12, 1931 to Wilfred and Ida (nee Koehn) Roggenbuck in Detroit, Barbara attended Detroit public schools and graduated from Wayne State University. She taught elementary education in Detroit for 30 years, retiring in 1994.

Following retirement, Barbara and Frank, longtime residents of Howell, made Port Hope their permanent home. Barbara became active in the community, volunteering for nearly 20 years as a curator and docent at the Frank Murphy Memorial Museum in Harbor Beach. There she combined her passion for teaching and history, leading countless tours and sharing her vast knowledge of the life and work of Frank Murphy, a former governor of Michigan, mayor of Detroit and U.S. Supreme Court Justice. She was also a familiar face at Our

Lady of Lake Huron Church where she served as a greeter at Saturday mass for many years.

Retirement also afforded Barbara the opportunity to indulge in another great passion, reading. A regular patron of the Harbor Beach library, Barbara was a voracious reader, averaging 100 books a year, with each title recorded and rated from 1 to 5 stars.

Barbara will be remembered most for her deep faith, independent spirit and grateful heart. She loved all creatures great and small, all things bright and beautiful and, most especially, her family, friends and beloved dogs.

A memorial mass and celebration of Barbara's life will take place late spring or early summer of 2021.

Memorial contributions may be made in Barbara's name to the Frank Murphy Memorial Museum and the Harbor Beach Area District Library.

Tribute Wall



“ *Barbara A. McGowan*

October 04, 2023 at 01:24 PM



“ *I am so sorry to hear of the loss of this wonderful lady! I loved seeing her come into the library every week to get new books! She will be dearly missed!*

*- Jordan Stallings
Harbor Beach Library Clerk*

Jordan Stallings - December 10, 2020 at 03:49 PM



“ *Good times growing up with McGoawans at Lindsey Home and at the Howell Home. Living on my own for 2 years finishing Degree at MSU, Mrs. McGowan , almost every Sunday, would call and Insist that I come over to the McGaowan Howell Home for a great home cooked Family meal and many laughs. Can never for get the " Wing Nut Event" boys Taking apart the top of Mrs. McGowans Engine in her Chevy in the driveway Detroit home, to see what was under that air cleaner , and dropping the Wing nut through the carburetor and into the Intake manifold.. Quick Get the tools before she sees Us.. She is having a good laugh on this one now. Thanks for the good times Mrs. McGowan..*

russ rehak - December 09, 2020 at 08:01 PM

TO

“ I will miss her too, as I do Frank. Wonderful couple, now reunited with God in Heaven.
Thank you Lord for their presence in my lifetime. I will never forget either of you.

Thomas O'Neil - December 07, 2020 at 11:33 PM

RC

“ So many wonderful memories of laughter with such an infectious person. I feel blessed to have shared so many wonderful times with this family. God is graciously awaiting you. Thanks for the memories.

Renee Carr - December 02, 2020 at 12:16 PM

AR

“ I am so sorry to hear of the loss of this lovely lady. She was always so kind and took the time to visit. Memory Eternal

Andrea Rapson - November 24, 2020 at 09:09 PM

AH

“ I met Barb when I first starting working at the Frank Murphy Museum in 2010. We clicked instantly and have been friends ever since. This breaks my heart and I will miss her dearly but I know Frank and Barb are reunited and laughing together, which is comforting. My heart goes out to her family, she truly was a wonderful lady, full of joy and spirit!

Amanda Haney - November 24, 2020 at 08:37 PM

LE

“ A very lovely lady. Always asked how our dog was. Will miss her beautiful smile at church,
Linda Essenmacher

Linda Essenmacher - November 21, 2020 at 12:48 PM

LM

“ I am so thankful for the time I spent with Barbara as she was teaching me everything I needed to know about the Murphy Museum. We had many wonderful conversations, not just about the museum, but life in general. What a great lady. She will be missed.



Lori Murawske - November 20, 2020 at 04:02 PM

DO

Barbara was passionate about education and the life and legacy of Frank Murphy. It was such a privilege to work with her in my reporter days, and to know and love both her and Frank as fellow parishioners.

Deborah Oglenski - December 14, 2020 at 11:48 AM

GZ

So very sad to find out about this. I am writing a biography on Frank Murphy. Over the last several years, I enjoyed speaking to Barbara. She was a youthful spirit and completely engaging. My condolences to her family and her community. She had a large impact, including on this New Yorker. Greg Zipes

Greg Zipes - January 16, 2021 at 10:34 PM