



Frances Theresa Barry

August 7, 1925 - June 24, 2023

Frances T. Barry (born 8/7/1925 in Detroit, MI) died on June 24, 2023, surrounded by family and things she loved—Elizabethan history books, crossword puzzles, the NY Times, and Hershey’s chocolate kisses. She is now reunited with two of her children—John (2022) and Mary Rose (2019)—as well as her beloved siblings and parents.

A former art and special education teacher for the Detroit Public Schools, Frances was raised during the Great Depression as the fifth of six children of Rose and Anthony Lehn—immigrants from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire and Germany, respectively. Her father, having died when she was 13, caused Frances and her sisters to seek jobs at factories during summer breaks from high school. She worked at the Detroit Desoto factory driving rivets into the wings of fighter planes destined for use by the US Air Force in WWII. Thereafter, Frances, having skipped a class level in school, received a full scholarship to Michigan State University where she obtained a degree in education. She later obtained two masters degrees in education from Wayne State University while raising five children and working as a teacher.

Family was preeminent in her life and she often said “love is shown by the food you prepare for others.” She particularly enjoyed preparing Polish food with her sisters, daughters, and nieces where everyone sat together around a large table making pierogis in an assembly line for large family Christmas

parties while sharing life's joys, burdens, and concerns.

Although the Great Depression and WWII continue to fade into history, Frances shared colorful details from these events. For example, during the Great Depression, she decided to become a teacher despite teachers not getting paid. Instead, Detroit teachers received IOUs, which, in her estimation, was better than others who lacked jobs. WWII also made a significant impression on her. Every block in her neighborhood had at least one Gold Star family—a soldier killed during service to the US. Frances also explained that everyone sacrificed for the “boys” fighting for us. While butter was provided to the “boys,” Detroiters used a two-component mixture—margarine that was white and a yellow dye—the combination of which was mixed until it looked like butter.

Visiting the library was a life-long joy that began during elementary school where she frequently asked librarians to obtain additional books that she didn't see on the library shelves. Even two weeks before her passing, she had borrowed 17 books from the library and electronically requested an obscure one-of-a-kind book from another library. She also often ordered books after reading the NY Times Book Review section or selected books based upon her favorite authors.

Frances' other favorite pastimes included art, museums, WWII movies, trying new recipes and solving crossword puzzles. She is survived by her children Edward, Caroline, David, daughter-in-law Susan (John), and grandchildren Jessica and Lauren, and numerous nieces and nephews. Frances was preceded in death by her parents Rose and Anthony Lehn, siblings Helen, Mary, Eleanor, little Mary, Franky and husband, John. A service will be held at Our Lady Queen of Angels in Detroit, the same Catholic Church where her parents were married and where she and her siblings were baptized and confirmed.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests those who wish to express sympathy to consider making a donation to Multiple Sclerosis or Ovarian Cancer charities.

In state Thursday, July 6, 9:30 AM until the 10 AM Funeral Mass at Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church, 4200 Martin Street, Detroit.

Interment Holy Cross Cemetery, Detroit.

To share a memory, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Cemetery Details

Holy Cross Cemetery

8850 Dix
Detroit, MI 48209

Previous Events

Lie in State

JUL 6. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady Queen of Angels
4200 Martin Street
Detroit, MI

Funeral Mass

JUL 6. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady Queen of Angels
4200 Martin Street
Detroit, MI

Tribute Wall



“ *Frances Theresa Barry*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *One couldn't ask for a better aunt than Aunt Frances. She was always kind and positive, making everyone feel special. She will be missed.*

Anthony S. S Kogut - July 05, 2023 at 09:53 AM



“ *I remember when I was little & coming over for lunch. Mrs Barry would send one of the older kids to pick up shaved chicken breast lunch meat for me & make the best sandwich!!! She would go out of her way to make everyone feel welcome.*

David Tapp - July 02, 2023 at 03:01 PM

“ Dear Carol and family:

I was deeply saddened to hear about the passing of your beloved mother. Please accept my heartfelt condolences during this difficult time. From what you've shared with me and the information in her obituary, it is clear that your mother was an extraordinary individual.

She belonged to the greatest generation, and her life was a testament to her strengths and resilience. Despite facing numerous challenges, she not only overcame them but also achieved immense success. Her dedication to scholarship was admirable, as she managed to earn two graduate degrees while raising a family and working full time. It is truly inspiring to see how she balanced her various responsibilities and thrived in her pursuits.

As an art and special education teacher, your mother had a profound impact on the lives of countless students. She shaped the future of several generations, and I have no doubt that her students are incredibly grateful to have had her as their teacher. Her dedication and passion for education were evident in her work, and her influence will continue to be felt for years to come.

Your mother's life spanned through significant historical events , including the Great Depression and World War II. Her ability to adapt and display personal stamina throughout all the changes she witnessed is truly remarkable. Her unwavering love for books, even until the end of her life, is a testament to her dedication to knowledge and intellectual growth.

You and your family are truly blessed to have had such a wonderful mother. I know that her presence will be deeply missed, and I hope that the memories and love you shared with her bring you comfort during this time of grief.

Please know that I am here for you, Carol, and I am sending you all my prayers and support. If there is anything I can do to help, please

do not hesitate to reach out.

*With heartfelt sympathies,
Girma*

gurma - June 28, 2023 at 01:07 PM

DB

“ *Dear Carol, Lauren, and family,*

What a remarkable life Frances Theresa Barry lived. Thank you for sharing her life and helping those who know you to now know her. Carol, your unfailing devotion and love for your mother was present in every conversation we had. Your words and actions are clearly a reflection of the love she showed you and she must have felt so loved by you and Lauren. Your mom was a very special woman—my deepest condolences to you and your family during this time. Wishing you comfort and peace. With love,

Donna Bailey

Donna Taylor Bailey - June 28, 2023 at 11:57 AM

JU

Sorry for your loss. She was a beautiful lady. And you were a wonderful care giver. Take care.

judydupaul - July 02, 2023 at 03:50 PM

BE

“ Dear Carol, Lauren, and family,

I am so sorry about the loss of Frances. She sounds like a wonderful woman who no doubt impacted many people's lives. May the memories of her be a comfort to you at this difficult time. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

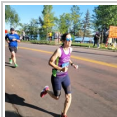
Beth McMahon

Beth - June 28, 2023 at 11:35 AM

KS

“ Dear Carol, Lauren, and the whole family,
Frances was a bright light on Kyle Ave. in Golden Valley and she will be missed. When my daughter and I stopped by, she engaged us with compliments, questions, and stories like the delightful teacher she was and we really enjoyed our visits! I am inspired by her life of the mind: advanced degrees, challenging teaching work, and then she pursued intellectual interests with passion while coping with the physical limitations that aging brought. And I'm inspired by her devotion to family and her family's devotion to her, shown in the nourishing environment that the family created and cared for Francis in. You all helped her live her best life to an advanced age. You are in my prayers right now as you adjust to missing your mom and grandmother. May Frances rest in peace and enjoy her joyous reunions in heaven!
Kate DeVries Smith

Kate DeVries Smith - June 28, 2023 at 09:37 AM



Thanks Kate—we appreciate it very much

Carol Barry - June 28, 2023 at 11:04 AM

DB

“ Dear Carol and family,
I'm sorry to hear of Frances' passing, and at the same time inspired by reading the loving tribute to her rich life so well lived. I know she was a loving and highly intelligent woman, and that her memory and spirit will be a comfort always . May she rest in peace. With love,
Della Boutrous

Della Boutrous - June 27, 2023 at 10:11 PM

CB

Thank you Della

Carol Barry - June 27, 2023 at 10:50 PM

JH

Carol:

Please accept my condolences for your loss. Mom's are so important to us and your mom must have been proud of raising someone like you. I am glad to hear she was with you and friends. Your memories will always be a source of strength. It was nice to see how close you were with her over the years. Best wishes to you, your family and her friends.

Jef Hohenshell

Jeff Hohenshell - June 28, 2023 at 08:19 AM