



## Shirley Ann Roman (nee Groves)

March 29, 1928 - May 15, 2020

Shirley Ann (Groves) Roman was born in 1928 in Coraopolis, PA. She passed away peacefully on May 15, 2020. Shirley was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Frank Vincent Roman, Sr., her parents Margaret Groves (“Nana”) and Roy Groves, and brother Roy (“Buzz”). She is survived by her son Frank Jr (Joni Burns), daughter Meg, beloved grand-daughters Leah (Andrew) Trepel and Shelby Roman, dear cousins Helen (Donahoe) Sullivan, Larry Hall, Gwen (Hall??), sister in law Carol Groves, and several nephews and nieces.

Shirley grew up in Racine, WI before moving to Gary, IN where she graduated from Emerson High School. She befriended young football quarterback Frank in High School, corresponding to him during WWII. They reunited when Shirley attended DePauw University and Frank attended Wabash College where Shirley had the unique honor of being chosen the very first “Sweetheart of Sigma Chi”. They married in 1952 and lived on the West Side of Gary until moving to the Miller neighborhood to begin their life as parents.

Mrs. Roman taught elementary school in Bloomington Indiana (while she put her husband through law school!), Gary, and ended with 20+ years teaching first grade at Crisman in Portage. She LOVED teaching and still introduced herself as a teacher right up until the end. Shirley took a sabbatical and was an active mom-exposing her children to every opportunity she could think of to ensure they would become well-rounded individuals. She loved taking them to the beach, music lessons, doing crafts of all sorts, being a Brownie leader,

supporting the Boy Scouts, taking them on vacations to locations that would enrich them, and celebrating every holiday in a festive way with home-made decorations and meals. Memorable family treats included her famous brisket and blueberry cobbler (Frank Jr's favorite).

She was a force for good and change in her community. She fought against strip clubs, refused to consider moving from Gary in the mid 1970s when many others did, and volunteered in many organizations. She loved hiking, walking the beach, exploring the dunes and teaching her children about the native plants and how to preserve the unique natural habitat all around Miller. She also enjoyed her daily walk where she often stopped to chat for a minute or three with various neighbors.

Shirley served on a number of committees and organizations such as PEO, Save the Dunes, Miller Garden Club, Miller Citizens Corporation, Alpha Chi Omega Alumni, Beta Gamma service sorority, Lady Lions, Junior League, Jaycees, Methodist Hospital Auxiliary, University Club, retired teachers association Knitwits (local knitting club), various book clubs, involved in the infancy of the Crisis Center, manned the phone at the COPS office, and served on many committees and boards of the Marquette Park United Methodist Church. The couple enjoyed attending innumerable dinner dances, charity balls and alumni events, complete with formal tuxedo and floor-length gown.

Shirley and Frank loved when the neighborhood children would spend hours in the yard, and they were also avid gardeners and birders. And she was very fond of travelling – with frequent trips to Ana Maria Island, FL, Aspen, London, Scotland, and other European countries. Pre-Club Med, they shared villas with a group of friends in Jamaica, Bahamas... even one time when they got to sleep in John Wayne's bedroom in Acapulco! Shirley also loved art – including paintings from local artists, as well as commemorating every trip with a piece of art that can be found framed in every corner of her home.

“Shirl Girl's” friends were incredibly important throughout her life – especially “The Elderberries”. These women were the better halves of “The Group” –

seven couples in Miller with whom Frank and Shirley shared decades celebrating anything they could think of with their famous cocktail parties. The Romans took full advantage of their proximity to Chicago with season tickets/memberships to Da Bears, and many theatres, concert venues and museums. And then there was Marshall Fields and its Walnut Room! Passionate, curious, witty, and creative. Somewhat formal, but not fussy. Shirley could set a beautiful table for dinner, and then run into the backyard to spray down a bunch of sandy kids after a day at the beach. After a life well-lived, Shirley moved into Rittenhouse Senior Living. The Family would like to thank the staff there, as well as the staff of Harbor Light Hospice, for the gracious care given to Shirley, and for laughing at her jokes until the end.

Given the circumstances surrounding the covid-19 virus, many compromises had to be made regarding arrangements. Initially, a small family service will be held at Burns Funeral Home in Hobart with burial at Calumet Cemetery on Wednesday May 20, 2020. When it is safe to do so, a Celebration of Life will be held to honor her properly!

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Friends of Marquette Park/Legacy Foundation, with this memo on the check: "Roman Family Memorial Bench", P.O. Box 2645, Gary, IN 46403, or Marquette Park Methodist Church 215 N. Grand Blvd, Gary, IN 46403, or Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Fl. 17, Chicago IL 60601 or online at: [http://act.alz.org/goto/Shirl\\_Girl](http://act.alz.org/goto/Shirl_Girl). Burns Funeral Home (Hobart) entrusted with arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## **Calumet Park Cemetery**

2305 W. 73rd Ave.  
Merrillville, IN 46410

# Tribute Wall

JD

“ Shirley was the spirit of Miller. I looked forward to seeing her as she was always upbeat, personable and full of fun

jean davis - May 26, 2020 at 06:52 AM

MR

“ Ms Evelyn H Reaves lit a candle in memory of Shirley Ann Roman (nee Groves)



Ms Evelyn H Reaves - May 26, 2020 at 06:24 AM

MR

“ Dear Meg, my family joins me in expressing our condolences for the loss of your mother. On the one occasion when I encountered your mother, I found her to be a very charming and warm lady who left an indelible impression on me. May the repose oh her soul reside in Heaven with your dad. The Reaves family of Miller.

Ms Evelyn H Reaves - May 26, 2020 at 06:22 AM

DH

“ Such a beautiful person- we just love your family and have many fond memories of Mr. and Mrs. Roman from church! Prayers for you all during this time. Love, Damara Hamlin and family

Damara Hamlin - May 22, 2020 at 01:48 PM

MS

“ Dear Meg,  
I am saddened to learn of your mom's passing and glad that I was able to spend time, some months back, laughing and talking with you both. Your mom and dad were the first family to welcome me to Gary when I moved here. I will always remember the history of Miller Beach they shared as well as their graciousness. Your mom lived a full, vibrant, life and would be please at your absolutely beautiful tribute! Please accept our sincere sympathy for your loss and our prayers for the days ahead.  
Mary & Cliff Pellegrini



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Mary Stewart-Pellegrini - May 22, 2020 at 01:45 PM

NG

“ Meg. That was an amazing obituary, a wonderful memory of a life well lived. You are certainly doing a great job of continuing the legacy.



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Nora Glenn - May 22, 2020 at 12:35 PM

KM

“ Very sorry for the loss of your mom. Sending prayers for you and your family.

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Kimberly Marshall - May 20, 2020 at 06:08 PM

KC

“ Meg, I am very sorry to hear of your mother's passing. Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

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Kim Covell-Campbell - May 20, 2020 at 05:00 PM

SB

“ Shirley was the kind of person that you felt like you knew her when you met her. She was such a warm and welcoming soul! I'm so glad I got to spend time with both Shirley and Frank. They added so much knowledge and joy to the memories I've collected.

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**Susan Binkley** - May 19, 2020 at 11:11 AM

JS

“ Meg - I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your Mom. My family has great memories of Mr. and Mrs. Roman. We were so fortunate to live across the street and have their influence on our boys during their young years. God bless you and your family.

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**Jeff Seibt** - May 19, 2020 at 09:36 AM