



Regrets to inform you

Our sincere condolences to the friends and family of Mildred Drees, who passed away on Thursday, September 2, 2021 in West Palm Beach, Florida at the age of 94.

Mildred was born in Portland on Franklin Street to Lewis and Fanny Kaplan, and grew up on St. Lawrence Street in Munjoy Hill. She is predeceased by her sisters, Sylvia Wenig and Shirley Holzberg; her brother, Milton Kaplan; and her husband, Maurice Drees.



Mildred graduated from Portland High School and received her B.A from Iowa Wesleyan University in English and French. After college, she spent two years living in Paris and studying at the Sorbonne. Upon her return, she worked as a French teacher in several Portland area high schools and, for many years, in Cape Elizabeth. She touched the lives of many students, who often kept in touch with her years after graduation.

Mildred married Portland businessman, Maurice Drees in 1954. The couple was active in the Portland community, in projects ranging from education to civil rights. They were also very involved in Portland's Jewish community, especially with the Russian Jewish resettlement program. After her husband's retirement, Mildred spent every winter at the Fountains in Lake Worth, Florida. While there, she became a docent at the Norton Museum of Art and participated in the Norton's "Picture Lady" outreach program, visiting inner city schools to teach children about art. Mildred also created her own art. She carved several museum quality marble sculptures in the Fountains art studio without any formal training.

Mildred was also fluent in Yiddish and led a Yiddish club. During her summers, she served as a docent at the Portland Museum of Art and the Wadsworth-Longfellow House. Mildred was an elegant, erudite person who loved to fill her homes with beautiful art and decorative objects. She was a prolific letter writer who kept in close touch with family and friends, often enclosing newspaper clippings that she thought would interest her readers. Her Portland family remembers attending many delicious holiday dinners around her big round table in her Portland House apartment – and especially her rugelach. Her standard greeting of "Bien! Comment ca va?" delighted all who knew her.

In her last years, she was dedicated to her sister, Sylvia, visiting her every day for 3 years at the senior care unit at Barrington Terrace in Boynton Beach. After Sylvia's death, Mildred moved to the assisted living unit at the same facility and became a beloved member of that community.

Mildred is survived by many nieces and nephews, grand nieces and nephews, cousins and her brother-in-law, Herbert Holzberg of Sea Bright, NJ, as well as several close friends all of whom will never forget her joyful approach to life, her love of beauty and her endless intellectual curiosity.

A private graveside burial service will take place at 11:00 am on Thursday, September 9, 2021, and will be live streamed on the Facebook Page of Jones Rich & Barnes Funeral Home. Donations in her memory can be made in Mildred's memory to Doctors Without Borders, at <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org>.

Zichrona l'vracha - may Mildred's memory be for a blessing.



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