



Name: Dian M. Holdship

Age: 89

Hometown: Bad Axe, MI

Funeral Date: May 28, 2019

Date of Birth: July 13, 1929

Date of Passing: May 20, 2019

Funeral Home: **MacAlpine Funeral Home**

Funeral Information

Visitation will be at MacAlpine Funeral Home in Bad Axe from 2 -8 pm on Tuesday, May 28, 2019. Services will be at Sacred Heart/St. Hubert's Catholic Church in Bad Axe on Wednesday, May 29th at 11 a.m., with Father Robert Howe officiating. Christian burial, next to her beloved "Doc," will follow at St. John's Cemetery in Ubyly. Donations in Dian's name and memory can be made to Breast Cancer Survivors charity and Lions Club Drive for eyeglasses. Condolences can be shared at www.macalpinefuneralhome.com

Family of the Deceased

Dian was preceded in death by her parents; one beloved sister, Shari Morello (Steve) Thompson, and numerous aunts and uncles. She is survived by her children; three grandchildren, Jeffrey Nicholas Van Erp, Alexander Carey Van Erp and Mia Marie Van Erp, all of Grand Rapids; numerous nephews, nieces and cousins; and literally hundreds of friends throughout the country, whom she maintained contact with over the years via her famous homemade Christmas cards.

Biography

Dian M. Holdship, 89, a longtime resident of Bad Axe, passed away following a short illness in Grand Rapids, MI. on May 20, 2019, surrounded by her loving children. Dian was born in Connellsville, PA, on July 13, 1929, to the late George and Marie (Donnadio) Morello. She graduated from Connellsville High School in 1946 and from Pittsburgh's Carlow College in 1951, with degrees in speech pathology and theater. She was also always proud that she took classes at Pittsburgh's prestigious Carnegie Tech's College of Fine Arts, where one had to audition for admission. On July 26, 1954, she was united in marriage with the great love of her life, Dr. E.C. "Doc" Holdship of Ubly, MI, at St Rita's Catholic Church in Connellsville. He preceded her in death on March 3, 2002. Together, they raised three children: William Gregory of Bad Axe; Jonathan Barry (Deborah) of Ann Arbor; and Gigi Ann (Jeffrey) of Grand Rapids. One of the greatest achievements of Dian's life was creating, writing, producing, directing and choreographing the "Alabama Jubilee" musical revue to benefit the Ubly Lions Club between 1955 and 1975, with a few years off to raise her family. The shows were a local sensation and attended by literally thousands of people from the state of Michigan, following rave reviews and feature stories — journalists were shocked that so much talent could be found and contained in such a small town — in the Detroit Free Press and other Michigan newspapers and even a commendation from the governor of the state. In later years, she was musical director of the Jubilee Singers, an offshoot of the earlier productions. Dian also later directed shows for Bad Axe High School's National Honor Society. She also spent one summer doing promotion, publicity and marketing for the musicals at Caseville Summer Enrichment Program. Following college graduation, Dian traveled the U.S. directing and choreographing musicals for local communities. She also worked for TV Guide/Pickwick Press in Pittsburgh; taught at Edgewood School for the Deaf in Beaver Falls, PA; and was the musical theater director at the H.M. Rickard Production Company in Black Rivers Falls, WI. She also gave private speech and drama lessons and worked for the Pittsburgh Playhouse. Dian was a full-time mother and worked sporadically in her husband's medical office following marriage. She was also a member of many local organizations, including Child Study Group IV in Bad Axe (in which she served as president for two terms); Ubly Women's Club (in which she served as president for one term); Ubly TVO Auxiliary; Huron County Council for the Arts; the Huron Memorial Hospital Auxiliary (president for two terms); and she was the originator and first director of Huron Memorial Hospital's Love Light Tree. Dian was also a member of the State

of Michigan Council for the Arts and Corresponding Secretary for the Michigan Osteopathic Association's Auxiliary from 1988 to 1989. A devout Catholic, she was also on the Bad Axe Sacred Heart Council for 11 years, as well as the Sacred Heart Altar Society, Women's Council and Worship Commission. She was a member of Verona Hills Golf Club and Bad Axe Parks Recreation, where she served on projects for handicapped and disabled children. And last but far from least, Dian started the Red Hats senior women's club in Bad Axe, serving several terms as Queen Mother. Among her many awards and honors is a Plaque of Achievement in Ugly Park for her work on the "Alabama Jubilee"; Carlow College's Alumni of the Year award in 1995; a professional endorsement and Alumni Service Award from Carlow in 1989; a "Director of the Year" award from the Michigan Council for the Arts in the '70s; the Jaycees Community Citizens Award in 1991; and the Ugly Founders Day Award in 1991. Dian was also a fabulous dancer and an excellent cook, especially of Italian cuisine. Dian made friends wherever she went. Even some of the nurses at the rehab center where she spent her final years wept when she passed. Many of them had gone to her for advice regarding their love lives. Dian loved people, and especially babies, and she will be greatly missed by the many people she touched over the years with her generosity, fabulous sense of humor and spirit. That spirit saw her survive so many pitfalls and obstacles over the years, including a broken pelvis, breast cancer, two broken hips and major lower back surgery. As a pillow in her room read: "I've survived damn near everything!" And she had. She was an incredibly strong and strong-willed woman. She later counseled numerous women suffering from breast cancer and helped save the lives of several who had given up hope. And, again, last but certainly not least, she loved ice cream. One of Dian's favorite mottos was: "The greatest talent in the world is finding talent in others, bringing it out and nurturing it." She often said that even if you were in charge of opening and closing a curtain for a show, you better strive to be the greatest curtain puller ever because without that important role, there is no show. Despite her numerous accomplishments in life, she always believed that her greatest achievement was as a mother and grandmother. And she was wonderful at both. Her family, whom she loved dearly, will greatly miss her forever.