



Rheda J. Walton

November 16, 1923 - November 13, 2020

Rheda J. Walton, three days before her 97th birthday, died peacefully in the arms of family in the early hours of November 13, 2020. She was the loyal wife of Thomas B. Walton (died 1985) and Donald R. Russ, M.D. (died 1964), and the loving mother of Donald E. Russ (Robin), Carol L. (Gilbert) Russ, Scott H. Russ (Adora), Jenny L. Stephani (Bill) and Diana L. Moore (David). She was grandmother of Sally & Annie Gilbert, Nicholas & Tommy Stephani and Thomas, Henry, Maddy & Gabby Moore. She was daughter of Wilford S. and Mary (Elliott (MacGregor)) Janson of Canton, Ohio, and had four brothers who predeceased her: Robert, Richard, Raymond and Russell.

She graduated from Ohio State University in 1944 and was employed as a secretary, teacher, stockbroker and investment advisor. A resident of Lake Forest for 52 years, she was a player of tennis and bridge, a member of First Presbyterian Church and Shore Acres Country Club, and a patron of libraries everywhere. She leaves a remarkable extended family and many supportive friends who will miss her profoundly. Her funeral and burial will be private.

Tribute Wall

NP

“ I remember how welcome I always felt in her home. No matter what was going on, there was room for me to be included. My weekend visits to Lake Forest remain highlights in my childhood memories. I do hope Rheda and my mother are once again enjoying each other’s company in heaven. Hugs and prayers of comfort to all the Russ children.

Nancy Coons Pearson - December 13, 2020 at 03:48 PM

CR

“ Yesterday was Thanksgiving, a favorite family holiday, and two weeks since my mother Rheda Walton left us. It has been so uplifting to share memories with friends and family. This tempers her absence; in those moments she’s with us again. Her kindness, her generosity, and her smile weave through our stories, and I am glad to know she was so well-loved. I will remember her as a fierce guardian when she thought I needed shelter, and a gentle foot wedge when she wanted me to reach out. I was blessed to know her.



Carol Russ - November 27, 2020 at 03:52 PM

KA

I adored your mother. Sending hugs & love to all her family. She will be missed ❤️

Kari Amundson - January 14, 2021 at 12:55 AM

AC

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Adora Carrillo-Russ - November 22, 2020 at 09:40 PM

AC

Love, compassion and respect. Scott and I were privileged to witness and learn these traits from you. You will be missed dearly.

Adora Carrillo-Russ - November 22, 2020 at 09:56 PM

AC

I am sharing this post from Marlyn received this morning.

Marlyn was one of the three nurses that Diana enlisted to care for Rheda during the night.

"Thank you for your beautiful heart! Rheda was a loving parent and a wonderful person. Her goodness was so radiant and we are the recipient. I was so blessed to be part of her life."

Adora Carrillo-Russ - November 22, 2020 at 10:10 PM



*I always enjoyed our coffee time at BK in the morning before work.
Chris Bacon*

Christopher Bacon - December 20, 2020 at 01:53 PM

JM

“ Carol - My thoughts and prayers go out to you and your family.
Keep and cherish the memories of your Mom.
John Minichiello

John Minichiello - November 21, 2020 at 06:12 AM

ML

“ I have many fond memories and have thought of a few in the last several days about Rheda and how positively influential she is to me.

Heart Warming

I was 12 or 13 and scared to death to meet her and Mr. Walton for the first time, remembering what Don advised me-- that Mr. Walton was to be called, Mr. Walton. I obviously called Rheda, Mrs. Walton. She politely let me call her Mrs. Walton for a while and then, she very gently looked at me in the kitchen of 690 one day and said, "Michael, why don't you call me Rheda."

Kind

When I was the new comer to the family and an awkward teen age boy, she would, at get togethers when a political or other topic was discussed, invite my thoughts on the subject at hand. "Michael, what do you think about" such and such. She always went out of her way to include me and make me feel welcome.

Outgoing

When my mother and Don went on their honeymoon, and Jennifer and I had locked ourselves out of the house, she cheerfully arrived and whisked us away to safety. I was upset by the situation but she said, "Let's go see what we can do." We had the best time playing games with her on the floor of the living room and learning card games. Another day I was sick at school and she came and collected me. I never had such a great day as laying on the sofa in the library under a comforter. She brought me soup and constantly checked in on me.

She never let on these times or many others that I had interrupted her day or had taken her away from her schedule-- although I'm sure I had.

Influence & Excellence

Living with her for a time, she would read my high school papers

and not just make corrections, but teach me invaluable grammar. She told me, "Michael, people will make decisions about you based on how you write and speak. If you use the wrong grammar and someone knows, they'll think about that error and not what you're saying."

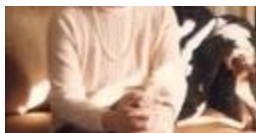
Another life long lesson, one morning I was eating breakfast and she said, "I'm going to buy you a new alarm clock today." I asked why, it seemed to me to be working fine. She said it must be broken because it went off every 10 minutes for about a half hour. I told her that was a Snooze feature of the alarm. Then she laughed and informed me that was not how alarm clocks were to be used. "Oh no Michael, if you want to get up at 7am, you set your alarm for 7am and get up when it goes off." That was the end of that conversation and I've never used the Snooze again.

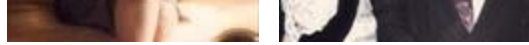
I always felt she expected 100%, well, because she said she did, "Always give anything you do your all, there's no half way." I guess when you hear this from someone you respect, it sinks in. When she helped me get a job at Shore Acres one summer, she said, "Get there early, stay late, and do more than is expected of you."

Thanksgiving

I remember one Thanksgiving trip when she left Chicago after us and arrived in Canton before us. I thought that little silk pillow really helped her get that Buick Regal's gas pedal closer to the floor. However, years later I was driving us back to 690 and was going maybe 30 or 35 on Ridge, she said "it's a quarter here." I asked what she meant and she said, "it's 25 MPH down Ridge Road." Since, I've never been pulled over on slow roads.

While 2020 has been a particularly crazy year, this year I am especially thankful for my time with Rheda and the special influence she has been in and on my life.





Michael Lind - November 19, 2020 at 12:28 PM

CR

You've captured her, stories so true to the way she lived her life.

Carol Russ - November 21, 2020 at 09:46 AM

JL

This tribute brought tears to my eyes; so beautifully and accurately stated.

Jill Lawrence - November 25, 2020 at 05:53 PM

AC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Adora Carrillo-Russ - November 19, 2020 at 12:14 PM

AC

Rheda and I had so many conversations while I had the chance to be with her and one of the many things I whispered in her ears was this "Nano, you are perfection!" Her eyes would lit up, She would smile and say, not really but I like it!

This picture is the proof of it all.

Scott and I will miss you dearly and we are so grateful we were able to spend time with you.

Adora Carrillo-Russ - November 19, 2020 at 12:22 PM

DM

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 11:09 PM

DM

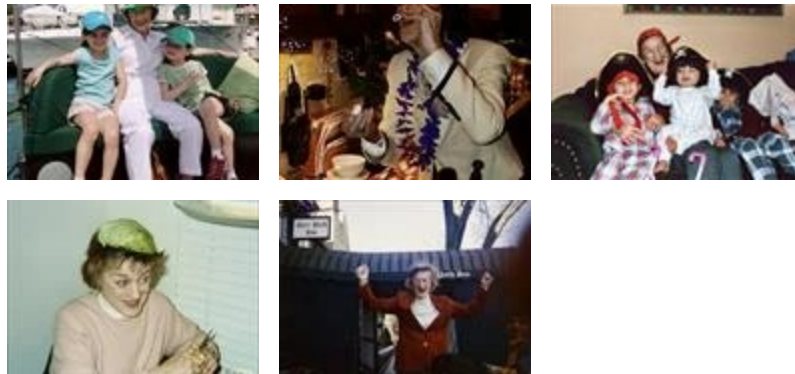
“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 11:08 PM

DM

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 11:01 PM

DM

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 10:54 PM

DM

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 10:53 PM

DM

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 10:52 PM

DM

“ How can you put into words the way you feel about your mom? How can you describe someone so fundamental, so foundational? Years ago for one of mom’s birthdays, one of my siblings had the idea that we should all write something to her, making special use of one letter from her name. Rheda – 5 letters. Don, Carol, Scott, Jenny, Diana – 5 siblings. I had the letter A, and even with that one letter, my poem had dozens of descriptors starting with the letter A.

In the broadest of strokes, she was...

Kind and demanding: She always saw the best in people, no matter the situation. How many times would I tell her of some injury, expecting commiseration, only to be told I should feel compassion for the person who misbehaved? And yet, if I was the one who had behaved badly... I still feel the weight of those steely blue eyes boring in, pushing me to be better.

Generous and frugal: Like so many of her generation, she went through many difficult periods in her life, but rather than turning inward she would reach out. In particular, when it came to education, she was singularly focused in nudging students on their way. She might pay a person’s tuition, or she might offer an incentive for completion. Generosity with a purpose! Yet this same woman would buy reading glasses that were on clearance, even if the magnification wasn’t quite right.

Brilliant and silly: She went to college at 16 (Go Buckeyes!) and thought it was a waste of time that we take so much longer now. Born a generation or two later, I believe she would have been CEO of a bank or brokerage, but following college she chose marriage and motherhood. When our father died, leaving her with 5 young children, she went back to work and quickly rose from assistant to investment advisor. Her love of math made her a remarkable investor, which she continued well into her nineties. She would have two computer screens running, financial news on the tv, and newspapers scattered about, yet she would drop it in the blink of an

eye if her grandchildren were available for a playdate. How many of you can conjure an image of Rheda, sitting on the floor with something silly on her head, a delighted grandchild nearby? I will post a picture or two to remind you.

Patient but perpetually in motion: The only time she was still was when she did her taxes, and that did try her patience. In fact, there were many years when she would race to the Highland Park post office, in order to get her tax extension post-marked before midnight! But she was patient. She had a small desk and chair, and there she taught her grandchildren how to write, and spell, and add... and learn. She had quiet, steady expectations, and was always available to answer their questions and praise their efforts. But really – do any of you picture her being still? Nope.

Quiet but musical: Ha! So I think I always knew she played the accordion. After all, the instrument was in our basement. As far as the piano went, she was dismissive of her skill. And then a year ago, while in rehab at Whitehall, she asked Adora to wheel her to the grand piano in the dining room. Astoundingly, she proceeded to put on an impromptu concert of a few songs, good enough to garner enthusiastic applause from the other families in the room. Wait... it continues. She informed Adora a few weeks ago that she also plays the trombone. How did we not know this??!!!

Fantastic but humble.

Diana Moore - November 17, 2020 at 10:15 PM

CR

Adora and I just read this... Adora always said to Mom "You are perfection!" Thank you for capturing her essence, Diana

Carol Russ - November 18, 2020 at 08:59 AM

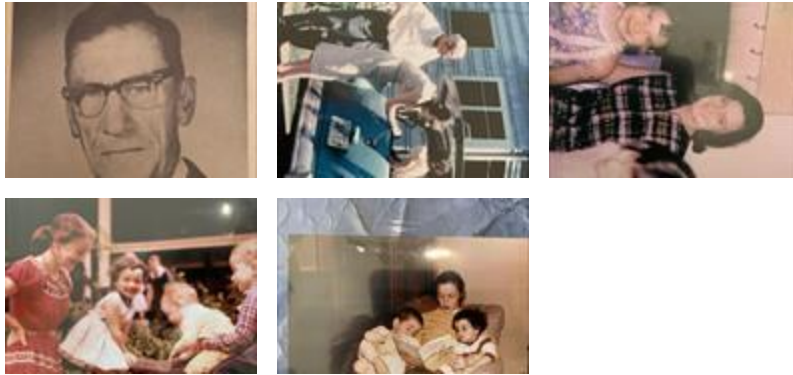
HH

“ We will miss her quiet, gracious, iron-willed presence - she was such a huge influence on all of us!

Hollis Howland - November 17, 2020 at 04:44 PM

JS

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Jen Stephani - November 17, 2020 at 12:32 AM

RJ

“ I have this saved on my phone. They say a picture is worth a thousand words...

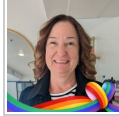


Rex Janson - November 16, 2020 at 08:47 PM

CR

Thanks Rex. Makes me happy to see these four so happy. Snazzy dressers! I think the shot is Eric/Darlene's wedding.

Carol Russ - November 16, 2020 at 10:38 PM



What a wonderful picture!

Pam Janson - November 17, 2020 at 12:27 PM



Such a wonderful group of siblings. They are greatly cherished and missed.

Molly Lawrence - November 17, 2020 at 12:32 PM



This photo really makes me smile!

Hollis Howland - November 17, 2020 at 04:35 PM



“ *She was a friend of my mother, Thelma Craft, with whom she played bridge. She was a great lady and always extremely interesting and fun. I really liked her as did my sister Susan. We were both very fortunate to have such wonderful mothers. My Dad, Al Craft, died at 97 in 2010 and he was a friend too.*

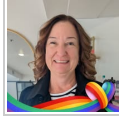
Debbie Schulz - November 16, 2020 at 06:31 PM



“ *4 files added to the album Memories Album*



Pam Janson - November 16, 2020 at 12:15 PM



So many great memories. Of Rheda with her grandchildren; really anyone's children, asking questions and really listening to their answers. Enjoying time with her siblings whenever they got together.

Pam Janson - November 16, 2020 at 12:18 PM

CR

*Jean Brown called and asked me to post this for her...
"Your mother was always smiling, always up. She had such a wonderful sense of humor, and she was so lovely to play bridge with. She was thoroughly nice all the time. I loved Rheda and I feel terrible her last years were difficult; I so dearly loved her."*

Carol Russ - November 16, 2020 at 12:50 PM



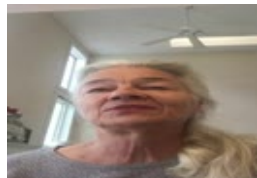
Aunt Rheda and her family came to visit our almost-completely renovated Logan Square house in 1992-ish, when we moved from Kentucky to Chicago. I had visited with Rheda at family gatherings prior, but this was my first time hosting. She asked why a large picture was sitting on the floor of the breakfast nook and we explained that we hadn't had time to hang it up yet. "Get a hammer" she said. Okay then. I got a hammer and up went the picture. "Git er done" and Rheda's grand and elegant image don't quite go together, oh, but they do.

That was also the visit where she brought two large dishes of food for the group. As the family was leaving, I hurried to clean the dishes for her to take. She said, "No, you keep them" and arguing was not going to change that. I still have the dishes.

Pam Janson - November 16, 2020 at 01:54 PM

CR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Carol Russ - November 16, 2020 at 02:09 AM

DR

*Hello Carol,
Thank you for the lovely tribute about your mom.
I don't have many memories of your mom, but
I remember that we both shared a Heal Thyself
mindset, meaning going to the doctor was last on the list.
She was thoughtful and generous, and I know she
will be missed. My heart goes out to you and your
entire family. 💕
Love
Debra & Family*

Debra Riha - November 16, 2020 at 02:37 PM

JE

*Great memories Carol! Thanks for sharing. I am glad to have had the
opportunity to meet her. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and the
family during this difficult time. Best wishes to you all. Jeep*

Jeep - November 16, 2020 at 04:18 PM

RP

*Thanks for sharing these precious stories of your mother. Very
touching to hear you recognize your family members for all their efforts
throughout these last years. I'm going to follow her advice, to keep the
lights dim in the bathroom!
Big hug,
renee*

renee preston - November 16, 2020 at 06:22 PM

RP

*My thoughts are with you Carol. Losing your mom is one of the most
difficult things in life we're dealt. For many years, before you and I
reconnected, I would run into your mom frequently at the many LF
estate sales we both attended. Her welcoming smile, and smiling eyes,
enthused to have another short visit, are what I remember fondly. ❤️*

renee preston - November 16, 2020 at 06:32 PM

JF

Aunt Rheda was a remarkable woman, living life with grace, grit and her own brand of self-assurance. My image of her is pearls, sweater set and a big, warm smile. Always putting family first, she made memories with Thanksgiving road trips to Ohio for all cousins to be together. She was the initiator of the celebration of those cherished times we maintain to this day.

Jill and I actually got to accompany Aunt Rheda, Carol and Jenny on one of their road trips the summer after our mother passed away. Aunt Rheda swung the station wagon thru Canton on the way to the World's Fair in Montreal -- Expo '67 with many interesting additional side trips.

Rich and I attended the Northwestern vs OSU football game after being newly engaged and Aunt Rheda threw a lovely engagement party for us at Shore Acres so Rich could get to know the Chicago cousins and vice versa.

Aunt Rheda will be missed at family gatherings but her legacy will live on through our cousins Don, Carol, Scott, Jenny, and Diana.

jenn flanagan - November 17, 2020 at 09:16 PM

LI

Carol, what a wonderful "book review" to listen to, and, along with reading your sister Diana's tribute, I have even more admiration for your mother whom I only knew casually from early morning visits to Caputo's, but sensed she was indeed a woman of great character...that is confirmed now. RHEDA, goddess of Victory, happy to have been acquainted with her...God bless.

*With faith and gratitude,
Love the journey...
Lindy*

Lindy - November 18, 2020 at 01:18 PM



“ **Christopher S Bacon, Lake Forest IL**

Christopher Bacon - November 15, 2020 at 09:50 PM