



Catherine Decker Sands

April 29, 1925 - August 21, 2021

Catherine Decker Sands of Seabrook Village in Tinton Falls, NJ, passed away on August 21st at the age of 96.

Born in Belfast in 1925 to Charles Mills and Isabelle (Decker) Mills, Cathy was 1 of 9 siblings. In 1950 she and her beloved husband, John, immigrated to the United States with their three young children. Their future was not pre-ordained to be a success. Cathy and John worked hard in pursuit of the American Dream, and to ensure a bright future for their children, one working the night shift and one working days for years. The life they achieved they earned, and their 76-year marriage was a blessing and inspiration, parted only by John's death last March. The lives their children achieved were in no small part due to the foundations John and Cathy built in those early years in Jersey City and Kearny - Irish immigrants finding their way in a new frontier. Working at RCA, Cathy was a trailblazer gaining top security clearance and progressing through the ranks. Everyone knew "Irish" was a force to be reckoned with.

Her family was her absolute pride and joy. Surrounded by love was how she thrived, always happy to boast about the accomplishments of her children Charlie (Valerie), John (Adrianna), and Catherine Hiler (Jack), her seven grandchildren, and her nine great-grandchildren. And her love extended beyond them to so many who loved "Nana" and "Aunt Kathleen" in return.

Her other great loves were God and Country. Her nightly prayers included “God Bless America”, “God Bless” was written in every card, and “Good Night and God Bless” was her loving mantra.

Cathy proudly lived life to the fullest, quitting a circuit gym in her 80s, proclaiming the workouts were “too easy”, and keeping up her jump-roping skills while in her 90s. Her family would brag of her amazing intelligence and sharp wit, her vivacity, her determination, her steel trap of a memory, and, above all, her unconditional love of them. No birthday will be the same without her, unaided by any reminder, being the first call and singing Happy Birthday along with John.

She also cultivated an amazing group of friends she loved to meet over a glass of Scotch, dinner, or a game of Rummikub. Whether in Kearny, Tinton Falls, or Pompano Beach, FL Cathy was always up for a gathering and had a story to share. Her life and her story were beautiful.

In addition to her children, Catherine is survived by her grandchildren Marcus Sands (Rose Ann), Heather Sands, Carey Michaels (Andrew), John Sands (Nora), Alison Isaacson (Nathan), Caitlin Schott (Jake), and Morgan Hiler; and her great-grandchildren George and Amber Sands, Amanda and Mateo Jimenez, Landon and John Sands, Reagan and Brooks Schott and Eliza Decker Isaacson.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. The family requests no flowers please, but donations in Cathy’s memory may be made to Butterfly Wishes 67 Walnut Ave, Suite 205, Clark, NJ 07066 or to Seabrook Benevolent Care Fund 3000 Essex Road, Tinton Falls, NJ 07753. For online condolences, please visit Cathy’s memorial page at www.bongarzonefuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall

SH

“ *One of the greatest gals I ever met! Loved when then would come visit it Florida! She & John were just such wonderful people 🥰*

Scott Heiman - September 14, 2021 at 05:24 PM

ML

“ *Always enjoyed our time together. Wonderfull stories and plenty of laughs. A beautiful person with a heart of gold. You are at peace and home with John. You will be missed.*

Rest in peace. 🙏🙏🙏❤️❤️❤️

Marge Lejda - September 08, 2021 at 05:52 PM

JB

“ *Catherine, we remember you as a beautiful and lovely woman and with whom we shared many pleasant times, dinners and a Chivas. You certainly enriched the lives of those with who you associated. We are fortunate to have met you and enjoyed your company. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Your friends, Judy and Sal Busacca.*

judy and sal busacca - September 04, 2021 at 09:34 AM

PC

“ We have nothing but fond memories of Cathy during the winter months at Jade Beach East. With a smile on her face, she was always ready to join us for a drink at the condo or dinner at one of our favorite spots. We can still picture Cathy and John sitting with us at the bar on a Friday night waiting for a table at Catfish Dewey’s. She always had wonderful stories of her interesting life that she loved to share. She was one strong, independent woman! We feel lucky to have known her. We will keep her family members in our thoughts and in our prayers during this difficult time.

❤️ *Pattie and Jim Conzelman*

Pat Conzelman - August 29, 2021 at 05:24 PM

SU

“ My family and I were lucky enough to spend Christmas Eve (or a near-day celebration!) with Nana pretty much every year of my life. She was just the most vibrant, spirited, perceptive, kind, gorgeous woman ever! She was full of love, wit, and spark for sure. As her obituary captures, she signed every Christmas card—written by hand of-course!—with "God Bless." I will miss her forever but feel comforted knowing she is with Poppi now and lived long and hard. My heart goes out to the family!



Suzanne - August 29, 2021 at 05:13 PM

NC

“ So sorry for your loss, Catherine. I never met your mother, but it sounds like she was one tough, amazing woman--"like mother, like daughter!" Wishing you peace, comfort, and strength during this difficult time.

Nora Crosen

Nora Crosen - August 27, 2021 at 05:34 PM

BF

“ We are very sorry to here about the passing of Cathy I was just going to call here last week we were very fond o her she will be missed. Betty and Dan Mc Fadyen

Betty mc Fadyen - August 27, 2021 at 10:37 AM

AL

“ Aranka LaSala lit a candle in memory of Catherine Decker Sands



Aranka LaSala - August 26, 2021 at 12:17 PM

JG

“ What a remarkable woman!! Just read her obituary and we wish we would have had the honor of knowing such a lovely, vibrant woman! I know I would have loved her! John, you and your siblings were so fortunate to be blessed with her as your Mother. Her love for you and Adrianna will carry on forever in your hearts. Love, Judy and Rick

Judy Glassman - August 26, 2021 at 11:57 AM

BH

“ *Bongarzone Funeral Home lit a candle in
memory of Catherine Decker Sands*



Bongarzone Funeral Home - August 25, 2021 at 05:53 PM