



Danna M. Henderson

May 22, 1934 - November 20, 2022

On Sunday, November 20, 2022, Danna Kusianovich Henderson, 88, passed away peacefully at her home in Easton, MD, with daughter Lisa by her side. She was born on May 22, 1934, in Roswell, NM, to Daniel and Marguerite Kusianovich. She married Jack Henderson in 1960, and Lisa was born in 1961.

Danna graduated from Capitan High School in 1947 as class valedictorian and enrolled at the University of New Mexico. She graduated in 1955 with a degree in journalism and a minor in archaeology. Danna became a reporter on the Albuquerque Journal and learned to fly at the long-gone West Mesa Airport. In 1959, she went to Washington, DC, as a research assistant to Sen. Clinton P. Anderson.

In 1960, Danna became a reporter for Aviation Daily. She then became managing editor of American Aviation. She also worked on convention newspapers, beginning with one for NBAA, and in 1967 published the first (and last) bilingual Convention News at the Paris Air Show in collaboration with Air et Cosmos.

In the early 1960s, Danna got her helicopter pilot's license and joined the newly created Whirly-Girls organization of women helicopter pilots. She went to the White House with other charter members of the Whirly-Girls and met

President John F. Kennedy.

She also worked as a freelance journalist, working at Transpo '72 for ALPA and AFA, Convention News at a number of conventions, and producing a newsletter for Indian tribes.

In 1973, Danna joined Air Transport World (ATW) magazine as managing editor. She stayed in this role until moving back to New Mexico in 1980, at which point she became a contributing writer for ATW – working on, among other things, the infamous World Airline Report. Danna worked for a number of years on ATW Daily News from its start to her retirement in 2011 after a 50+-year career as an aviation journalist.

Danna moved back to Maryland in 2003 to be close to daughter Lisa and grandson Jesse.

Other notable interests included:

- A love of horses; Danna became a champion barrel racer
- Life Master in Bridge
- Website committee of her community
- With childhood friend Claire started finding and contacting other "Fort Stanton Kids" and asking them to write their memories and share photos. This was the catalyst for two wonderful photo books written by Jim McBride: Fort Stanton Marine Hospital and Children of Fort Stanton. In 2005, the two put together a fabulous reunion attended by more than 60 Fort Stanton Kids and their families.
- Wrote for the Fort Stanton newsletter for many years about the history of the Fort and the Fort Stanton Kids who lived there between the early 1920s and 1953.

Danna was preceded in death by husband Jack, and her parents Daniel and Marguerite Kusianovich of Albuquerque, NM.

She is survived by daughter Lisa Ray, grandson Jesse Ray (wife Lauren), great granddaughter Riley Magnolia Allison Ray, and brother John Kusianovich, LaBelle, FL.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2022 – 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM at Fellows, Helfenbein, and Newnan Funeral Home, 106 Shamrock Rd, Chester, MD 21619.

Donations in Danna's memory can be made to Talbot Hospice.
(<https://talbothospice.org/donate/ways-to-give/tribute-gifts/>)

Previous Events

celebration of life

DEC 11. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Fellows, Helfenbein, & Newnam Funeral Home, P.A.
106 Shamrock Road
Chester, MD 21619

The formal service, that will be live streamed, will begin at approximately 2:30pm.

Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Danna M. Henderson*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - December 11, 2022 at 02:03 PM

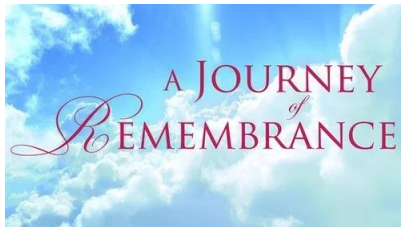
GW

Danna was truly a long-time friend - 64 years. I knew her when she worked for Sen. Clinton Anderson of New Mexico and I was the Washington Correspondent for the Albuquerque Journal. She got me into flying, though she went further with aviation than I did. Lisa: Can you give me your e-mail address so I can share some private memories? I am Gordon Eliot White, gewhite122@gmail.com

Gordon Eliot White - December 27, 2022 at 04:11 PM



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Danna M. Henderson*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - December 09, 2022 at 03:33 PM



“ *Danna M. Henderson*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Danna M. Henderson*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Danna M. Henderson*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *What a beautiful celebration of life to honor such an extraordinary woman! Thanks so much for the webcast so those of us far away could still share in the event. Love to you all -Laura McColm WG#1329*

Laura McColm - December 11, 2022 at 03:44 PM



Thank you Laura - she truly was extraordinary and she always treasured your friendship. The WG organization was near and dear to her heart. Glad you were able to join in from afar.

Lisa Ray - December 15, 2022 at 08:57 AM

MB

“ While I did not know Danna personally, she is one of the aviation pioneers who inspired me. Please accept my condolences for the loss of an interesting and vibrant family member of our aviation community of women.

Respectfully,

Margaret (Brewer) Bruce

Whirly Girl #355

Capt 767 American Airlines, retired.

Mooreville NC

Margaret Bruce - December 11, 2022 at 12:59 PM

LR

Thank you Margaret - we appreciate it

Lisa Ray - December 15, 2022 at 08:57 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Danna M. Henderson.



December 09, 2022 at 12:01 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Danna M. Henderson.



December 08, 2022 at 04:04 PM



“ John purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Danna M. Henderson.



John - December 08, 2022 at 08:16 AM



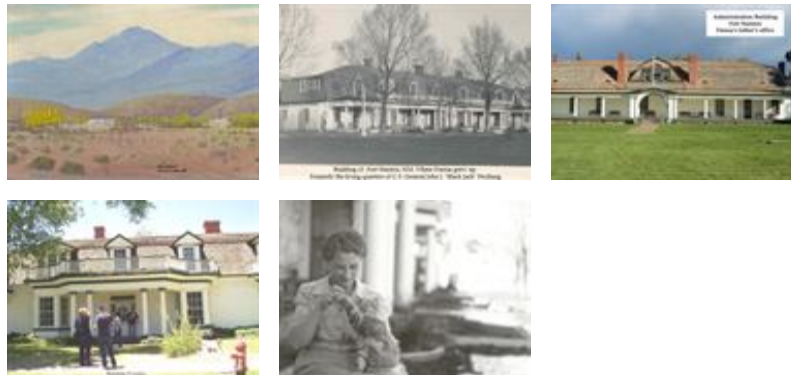
“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Danna M. Henderson.



December 07, 2022 at 05:01 PM



“ 171 files added to the album LifeTributes



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - December 06, 2022 at 04:05 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Danna M. Henderson.*



December 06, 2022 at 03:11 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Danna M. Henderson.*



November 30, 2022 at 08:34 PM



“ *Danna was a great help when we dedicated a memorial plaque to the airmen lost in the crash of an USAF B36 bomber on the mountain in El Paso. She arranged with Southwest to fly the widow and (now adult) children for the dedication. She made sure that the pilot recognized them and the pilot asked the other passengers to remain seated until they disembarked to applause.*

We now applaud Danna's life of helping others.

*John Moses
Santa Fe*

John Moses - November 29, 2022 at 01:07 PM

LR

Thank you John--we appreciate that.

Lisa Ray - December 05, 2022 at 08:40 PM

EL

“ *Edvaldo Pereira Lima lit a candle in memory of Danna M. Henderson*



Edvaldo Pereira Lima - November 28, 2022 at 07:58 PM

LR

Thank you Ed - hugs

Lisa Ray - December 05, 2022 at 08:40 PM

JM

“ *For me as a journalist and unabashed student of politics and public service, Danna made Washington DC a more exciting and rewarding place, with her knowledge, her sense of humor, and her friendship. I miss Danna. But I will never forget her and the difference she still makes in my life.*

John McClenahen - November 26, 2022 at 01:40 PM

LR

John - wonderful to hear from you and such a nice tribute. Thank you.

Lisa Ray - December 05, 2022 at 08:41 PM

LR

“ *Lisa Ray lit a candle in memory of Danna M. Henderson*



Lisa Ray - November 25, 2022 at 09:15 AM

TB

“ *Danna was an incredible lady. far more incredible than I had ever realized before reading her obituary.*

Her husband Jack, daughter Lisa and I shared a mutual friend in Bobby Thomas.

Danna enjoyed spending time at the airport. We spent many hours talking about many things. She deeply missed her husband Jack and the many family adventures! She was even a helicopter pilot! Rest In Peace my friend. I have missed you.

Teddy Bryant - November 24, 2022 at 05:02 PM

LR

Ted - she so enjoyed hanging out at the airport! She valued your friendship.

Lisa Ray - November 25, 2022 at 09:16 AM

LS

“ *So sorry to see such a classic in today's world go over the Rainbow Bridge. I will always be grateful for the information Danna shared with me for my book Fort Stanton, Legacy of Honor, Tradition of Healing. Much of the story of the Hospital Era, the buildings, the people would not have been fleshed out as they were with her great memory and photos. She left quite a legacy and for that we will always be thankful. Lynda A. Sanchez, Lincoln, New Mexico*

Lynda A Sanchez - November 24, 2022 at 11:00 AM

LR

Lynda - Yes Fort Stanton was in heart and she (and Claire) spent countless hours on collecting history of the Hospital Era and the Ft. Stanton Kids. She left a legacy indeed and our family will always cherish the books that she contributed to and the exhibits featuring our family history there.

Lisa Ray - November 25, 2022 at 09:24 AM

HH

“ We are thinking of all of you and keeping you in our prayers. Myra, Will and Harry Hudson

Harry Hudson - November 24, 2022 at 10:05 AM

LR



Lisa Ray - November 25, 2022 at 09:25 AM

LR

“ 6 files added to the album Danna



Lisa Ray - November 23, 2022 at 03:36 PM