



Herta Hildegard Hess

October 27, 1929 - July 31, 2024

We celebrate the life of Herta Hildegard Hess (Reinhardt), who passed away peacefully at the age of 94. She joins her husband of over 70 years in heaven, Heinrich “Harry” Hess, who passed away last year at the age of 93.

Herta was born in Pirmasens, Germany on October 27th, 1929. She is preceded in death by her younger sister, Irene, as well as her parents, Paulina “Paula” Martin and Eugen Reinhardt.

In school, Herta was a social student who enjoyed playing handball. However, her life was changed forever when war broke out. She risked her life to obtain food for her family as she gathered potatoes from a field that was actively patrolled by gunmen. Ultimately, her home was bombed and her town was destroyed near the end of the war. Surviving war undoubtedly contributed to her strong-willed personality and tenacious spirit.

After the war, she worked for the International Refugee Organization in the Displaced Persons Commission. After multiple promotions, she transferred to Munich where she was an interpreter and translator. It was there that she met Harry, who worked as a transport officer. Between Herta’s English skills and Harry’s motorcycle, the duo started a side business romping around the city selling black market cigarettes to American soldiers. It was during this time they dreamed of coming to the US, which became a reality when Harry

obtained a sponsor and immigrated in 1952.

Herta joined him soon after, arriving in Ellis Island on June 25th, 1952. They were married on August 8th, 1952. As newlyweds, they moved to Georgia where Harry was stationed with the US Air Force, but settled back in Rochester, New York, where they had two children, Michele and Ron. Per her mother-in-law's dying wish, Herta was baptized in the Catholic Church on November 16th, 1956.

Always the social butterfly, Herta found her calling as the star of Rochester's German radio show, "Musik mit Monica," a fitting position for her magnetic and radiant personality. This cemented her as a fixture in the German community, often hosting large parties in her backyard pool. Their house was constantly filled with friends and overflowing with German beer.

Once their children were grown, they relocated to Canandaigua Lake, where Herta designed a house overlooking the lake. While there, she enjoyed close companionship with her Akita, Bear. They later bought a small cottage on the waterfront, and Herta designed a full-time home on the property. They spent many winters in Florida, first in Port Charlotte and later in The Villages, where they greatly enjoyed spending time with their neighbors and where Herta was an active member in neighborhood associations. They finally moved to Baywoods of Annapolis in 2016 to be closer to family. Herta often commented that Annapolis reminded her of her hometown, Pirmasens, with its cobblestoned streets and historic buildings.

Herta and Harry (or "Omi" and "Opa" as they are known to their family) are very proud parents to Michele (Gary) Matthews and Ron (Patty) Hess, grandparents to three grandchildren (Nicole, Kyle, and Lindsay [Tom]), and three great-grandchildren (Miara, Nasib, and Luke). They celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 2022.

The family would like to thank everyone at Gilchrist Hospice, and especially the staff on the 3rd floor of Baywoods of Annapolis, for their loving care for our dear Omi and Opa over the past 4 years.

Tribute Wall

VM

“ Verena M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Herta Hildegard Hess.

Verena M. - August 28, 2024 at 02:18 PM

AO

“ Angela Obuhanych lit a candle in memory of Herta Hildegard Hess



Angela Obuhanych - August 11, 2024 at 01:59 PM

AO

“ Ron, Michelle & Gary,

We're so sorry for your loss of Herta, as well as Harry. We have such fond memories of them as our neighbors, and we will never forget their kindness to our family, including our kids who they insisted should call them Omi and Opa. They truly were like another set of grandparents to them, with Zach a regular visitor to their front door for cookies (sometimes in nothing but his diaper), and Olivia bringing Herta as her guest to her "special person" lunch at school. Olivia still has the jewelry box Herta made for her with shells from her beach and a picture she took of Liv's first jet ski ride with Dad. Herta was also witness to Zach's first time jumping off the dock at age 2, with Liv & Mom holding his hands. (And just like a grandmother would, she let us know she was very worried while she watched the event!) Even our dog Jagger loved them, and Harry would call him his best friend.

We have really missed them since they moved out of the area. Our sincere condolences to you as well as your kids and grandkids. They were very special people.

Mark, Angela, Olivia & Zachary Obuhanych

Angela Obuhanych - August 11, 2024 at 01:59 PM

JM

Was your family friends of Walt and Joyce Scheiman?

john (Butch) McCoy - September 27, 2024 at 11:40 AM



Hello, sorry but I just saw this. Yes, they were friends with them many, many years ago. What is your connection? Michele (Hess) M.

Michele Matthews - September 20, 2025 at 10:18 AM



“ 4 files added to the album *Memories Album*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - August 02, 2024 at 01:46 PM