



Irene M. Bean

December 25, 1938 - December 23, 2020

COLEBROOK – Irene M. Bean, 81, of Colebrook, died on Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020, at the Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital after being suddenly stricken at home.

She was born in West Stewartstown on Christmas Day, 1938, a daughter to the late Walter A. Bryant, Sr., and Mina (McLean) Bryant. She grew up on the family farm, attended the local schools and was a 1956 graduate of Colebrook Academy. She built two homes on South Hill where her heart is today.

Irene worked for several years at The Balsams while raising her eight children. She was a nurturing soul who loved to help others in any way she could. That part of her character led into furthering her education, receiving a B.S. in Human Services and a long career as a social worker in Berlin and Colebrook, a job she loved, and which included acting as a domestic violence counselor and case worker for her beloved communities. She was instrumental for many years in the Helping Hands organization, the local food bank, and Tri-County CAP. She ran an assisted living home for 8 years with her son, Tommy, until his passing.

Irene was a ubiquitous personality in and around town with a very community-orientated spirit. She loved local politics and ran to be a legislator in the NH House of Representatives for her home district in the 1990s. Irene had strong

beliefs in the north country way of life. She was vehemently opposed to the “Northern Pass” because it would ruin the beautiful vista she called “home.”

Some of her accolades throughout her many years of service to the Colebrook community include: Volunteer of the Year in 2004 from the Main Street Revitalization Award, Community Service Award from the N.H. Charitable Foundation, and being a founding member of several north country initiatives, including the North Country Impact Drug & Alcohol, the Colebrook area domestic violence council, the foster grandparent program, and the Haven mental illness peer support group.

Her family was central to her life, and her ultimate pride and joy; she loved spending time with them. She was an avid gardener, both flowers and vegetables, loved swimming in her pool, knitted hundreds of pairs of mittens and enjoyed oil painting. Irene’s family will remember her as an excellent cook who also wrote her own recipe book with other home remedies included. She was not afraid to give most anything a try. She collected antiques, baseball cards, books (especially of local history) and coins. She enjoyed foraging in the woods for wild leeks and down by the river for fiddleheads every spring, and in the fields for berries of every kind. With her rewards she liked to can and preserve her finds to be enjoyed and appreciated at special events. One of her family’s favorite were her “little sour pickles!” She was a leader and advocate for Colebrook’s first “Community Garden,” a place where she wanted to help people plant, grow, and harvest wonderfully fresh vegetables.

Her motto in life was to “never give up.” This was evident by the challenges that life handed her, though you would never know it. She always had an upbeat attitude and a beautiful smile for anyone who greeted her. She was extremely selfless. Irene had an entrepreneurial spirit which kept her looking for any new opportunities. She was industrious by nature and often able to figure out solutions to problems. Irene was a Justice of the Peace and enjoyed

performing ceremonies for weddings, including for 4 of her children.

Irene led a life of servanthip to Colebrook and the surrounding area and will be sorely missed by all those who knew her and loved her. And “though she be little...she be fierce!” Farewell our Christmas Angel, wife, mother, friend... we will be with you again.

She leaves behind her husband of 48 years, Valtin Bean of Colebrook; six children, Connie Goodrum (Danny) of Illinois, Donna Mercer of Vermont, Terrie Nelepovitz (John) of NH, Daniel (Chris) Mercer of NH, Kathy Mercer of NH and Jaunita Field (Scott) of NH; a sister, Jean Bryant of Colebrook; 14 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren; a daughter-in-law, Jennifer Jacques of NH; as well as several nieces and nephews and cousins.

Irene is preceded in death by two sons, Jacob Bean and Thomas Mercer, and a brother, Walter “Bill” Bryant, Jr.

There are no public calling hours. A graveside interment service will be held in the Colebrook Village Cemetery on Saturday, May 29, 2021, at 10 a.m.

Expressions of sympathy in memory of Mrs. Bean may be made to Helping Hands, 96 Main St., Colebrook, NH 03576.

Condolences may be offered to the family on-line by going to www.jenkinsnewman.com.

Funeral arrangements are entrusted to the care of Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home in Colebrook.

Cemetery Details

Colebrook Village Cemetery

North Main Street, U.S. Route 3
Colebrook, NH

Previous Events

Graveside

MAY **29**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Colebrook Village Cemetery
North Main Street, U.S. Route 3
Colebrook, NH

Tribute Wall

AM

“ I am sadden to hear of Irene's passing. She was an energetic and loving star passing through. Her passion was evident in all her pursuits. Her down to earth go get them attitude catching in its enthusiasm. I will miss her as I know others throughout the North Country and beyond will.

Angela Martin-Giroux - March 16, 2021 at 03:34 PM

DO

“ Like many others, I had the opportunity to work with Irene in The Balsams Dining Room. Her can-do, fun demeanor was infectious. My thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Dave Olmstead - February 20, 2021 at 08:16 AM

SK

“ Dear Val and Family...I am so sorry for the loss of Irene. She was an amazing woman. Strong, Loving, Funny, Warm and always Welcoming. There are not enough words to describe her. I always felt so blessed to have had Irene and her Family in a little part of my life. I remember being in her presence at the Balsams. Irene always lit up a room with her smile, kindness and joy. Walking into her home she was always so welcoming and loving. May all the memories you carry close to your Hearts bring you some comfort at this difficult time.
Much Love and Warm Hugs Always,
Suzi

suzi konopka - January 05, 2021 at 07:48 PM

SK

“ *Suzi Konopka lit a candle in memory of Irene M. Bean*



suzi konopka - January 05, 2021 at 07:36 PM

CR

“ *Sympathies to Irene's family. She touched so many with good will.*

Cindy Roy - January 05, 2021 at 02:27 PM

CR

“ *Deepest sympathy to the family, Irene will always hold a special place in my heart, she was one of a kind and we loved her dearly.*

Carol Rainville - January 03, 2021 at 02:41 PM

RM

“ *Our deepest condolences to Irene's precious family. She was such a loving, compassionate, and sweet lady. We had the pleasure in meeting her while we first launched our TaeKwonDo school. Irene was institutional in helping us obtained grants for children who could not afford the fee. She was always mentoring us and helping us in areas we needed to excel in. We will always be grateful to have Mrs. Bean in our lives. Her passion to help those who were less fortunate than others, and to see children excel in their gifts will always be remembered. Our prayers go out to her precious family. What an example she was to us. Where there's a will there's a way. With love and respect, Renald and Lynn Mathieu*



Renald Mathieu - December 28, 2020 at 07:49 PM

JL

So very sorry for your loss. Sending prayers your way.

Joyce Ladd - December 30, 2020 at 10:52 AM

KS

“ Irene married us 20yrs ago new yrs eve on trail ! Wished we had meant her passions are similar to mine ! Prayers sent to her family

Karen Shutt - December 28, 2020 at 10:28 AM

CJ

“ Irene and Val were my parents friends for many years when we owned next door to them on South Hill!!Jacob was one of my best friends growing up!!Jackie and Jr. Lakin were my parents!She was an amazing lady who would invite you in and she will be missed!!So sorry for your loss Val and family!!Christine Lakin Judd

Christine Lakin Judd - December 28, 2020 at 09:19 AM

CC

“ Irene was a wonderful person. She made the world a better pkace.

Charlie Cotton - December 28, 2020 at 09:04 AM

JH

“ Judi Hanson lit a candle in memory of Irene M. Bean



Judi Hanson - December 28, 2020 at 08:16 AM

KL

“ *She was such a strong person. She will be missed. My thoughts and prayers to all her family.*

Karen Lynch - December 27, 2020 at 07:00 PM

MJ

“ *So sorry to hear of Irene's passing. I have fond memories for working with her on community projects. She was a dedicated and passionate volunteer. Colebrook will miss her.*
Michele Johnsen

Michele Johnsen - December 27, 2020 at 06:45 PM

HH

“ *Irene or as she was known to me as Beanie from her days at the Balsams. She officiated my wedding at my parent's farm. We always had a good time with Beanie especially if Ken Webb was around too. Beanie you will be missed and we extend our condolences to your family on their loss.*

Haven Haynes - December 27, 2020 at 05:56 PM

JG

“ *Irene was a little ball of energy. She was a wonderful lady who loved big. Her smile and laughter were contagious. I can hear her laughter even now, so full of joy. My heartfelt condolences to Val and the rest of Irene's family.*

Jill (Rowe) Gadwah

Jill (Rowe) Gadwah - December 27, 2020 at 03:14 PM

JC

“ *Jan Corliss lit a candle in memory of Irene M. Bean*



Jan Corliss - December 27, 2020 at 12:45 PM

JC

Sending my deepest condolences to Connie and the rest of Irene`s family. She was so much fun to work with at the Balsams and the van rides back and forth were an adventure. She will live on in your hearts.

Jan Corliss - December 27, 2020 at 12:50 PM



we light a candle at this moment and say a silent prayer although we were not graced with knowing her ..we were blessed to have her daughter brought into our lives <3

Stephanie-catherine Cavanaugh-harrison - December 28, 2020 at 05:02 PM

CO

Thank you Jan for your kind thoughts, Connie

Connie - December 29, 2020 at 10:26 PM

CF

“ *My deepest sympathies to Dan & Chris, Emily and Michelle and families for your loss. Irene was such a special selfless gracious lady. I have fond memories of working with her when we founded Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity.*

Carolyn Foss - December 27, 2020 at 12:18 PM

AU

“ Audie lit a candle in memory of Irene M. Bean



Audie - December 27, 2020 at 11:41 AM

TM

“ Wishing you peace to bring comfort and the courage to face the days ahead and loving memories to forever hold in your hearts.
Love,
The McKinnon Family



Terry McKinnon - December 27, 2020 at 11:35 AM

BG

“ So sorry for the families loss. Have known Irene for years.worked with her years ago. She was the kindest person ever.She will be missed by all



Brenda Gadwah - December 27, 2020 at 11:35 AM

LB

“ Irene was such a wonderful person, my condolences to her family



Lana Brooks - December 27, 2020 at 11:20 AM

LV

“ Our sincere condolences to all of the family. I remember working in the Balsams Dining Room with Irene. She was such a hoot. She spread joy, wherever she went. She will be missed by all who knew her. RIP Irene.



Lisa Vashaw - December 27, 2020 at 11:12 AM

CL

“ Carol Leach lit a candle in memory of Irene M. Bean



Carol Leach - December 27, 2020 at 10:16 AM

RB

Our deepest sympathy to Irene's family. She was a bright light to everyone who knew her. She will be missed. RIP bright star

Ronald and Linda Beloin - December 27, 2020 at 11:40 AM



I've lived less than a mile away from Irene since my family moved here in 1948. I have seen her overcome adversity several times and always with a positive attitude. A truly giving person always trying to help those in need. There should be more people like her in this world. Rest easy blessed lady.

Daniel Beloin - December 28, 2020 at 04:43 AM



we light a candle at this moment and say a silent prayer although we were not graced with knowing her ..we were blessed to have her daughter brought into our lives <3

Stephanie-catherine Cavanaugh-harrison - December 28, 2020 at 05:03 PM