



Mrs. Lucia H. Cowles

May 22, 1916 - May 13, 2019

AUBURN - Lucia Helen “Lucy” Cowles, life-long resident of Lewiston-Auburn, died in her sleep on May 13, just nine days shy of her 103rd birthday. She was born in Lewiston on May 22, 1916, at the home of her parents, both Lithuanian immigrants. She was their second child, and their second daughter named Lucia (the first Lucia, b. 1914, died after falling down a flight of stairs when she was barely one year old). The name on her birth certificate is Mary Lucey – she recalled that in those days, all baby girls were named Mary, and all boys Joseph, in Catholic households. But they were known by their “middle” names. Somewhere along the way, Lucy picked up the middle name Helen, but she did not remember how or why. There would be three other children, all boys – and all, like her, named after saints.

The family name was Yurkstas but was Americanized to Yurkston by her father. Her father came to New York City on a fishing boat, jumped ship, and moved to Rumford, Maine, which had a large Lithuanian community. Her mother came to America through Ellis Island when she was only 19 years old. Her parents married shortly after she arrived, but the marriage was not a happy one, and they divorced when Lucy was 14 years old. Custody of all four children was awarded to her father because her mother had fled the household. But Lucy was unhappy there and ran away to live with her mother. She and her mother were the best of friends, often going to movies and dances together, appearing more like sisters than mother and daughter. Her mother remarried and a fourth brother was born when she was 16. She quit school after the 9th grade to care for the baby so that her mother could work in the mill.

As a young woman, Lucy worked at Auburn Wood Heel Company as a “cripple girl” (inspecting finished product for defective heels) and there met her future husband, George Mitchell “Mike” Cowles. They were married in 1941, and had two daughters, Patricia Ann stillborn in 1947, and Paula Mae in 1953. In 1954, they bought a small, single-story home on Sterling Road in Auburn, where she lived for the remainder of her life (save for her last few months under nursing home care at Odd Fellows’ and Rebekah’s Home of Maine). She returned to the workforce after daughter Paula could take care of herself after school, most notably in retail in B. Peck Company (department store) in Lewiston. She also earned a certificate and worked as a CNA in a nursing home for a short time.

She joined the Ruth Rebekah Lodge at the age of 17, and was a life-long, active member for more than 80 years. She also joined First Auburn Senior Citizens and was a founding member of Robin Dow Seniors. Lucy was a caring, giving woman, volunteering for whatever needed to be done, and serving as an officer (usually at multiple ranks) in all of her clubs. She was generous with her time and talents to her family and her many friends. After her husband's death in 1992, she began oil painting, producing many lovely landscapes and other subjects that now grace the homes of her many friends and family. She was predeceased by her mother Annie Grimmel, her father Paul Yurkston, her husband Mike of 50 years, brothers Alfons "Allan" York, Felix Yurkston, and Paul Yorkston, half-brother Harold "Jack" Phelps, and beloved nephews Alfred Cowles and Allan Stuart York. She is survived by her daughter Paula Mikkelsen, nieces Linda York Reak, Judi Yorkston Curtis, Christine Phelps Geelhoed, Carole Cowles Cook, and Brenda Cowles Crown, and nephew Gerald Cowles. An informal gathering in celebration of her life will be held at Pinette Dillingham & Lynch Funeral Home in Lewiston on Saturday, June 1, from 3-5 pm. A private burial will follow at a later date. Online condolences and sharing of memories may be expressed at www.lynchbrothers.com

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her memory to Liberty Rebekah Lodge #94, c/o Esther Tucker, P. O. Box 104, West Poland, ME 04291-0104

Cemetery

Events

**Oak Hill
Cemetery**
Seventh Street
Auburn, ME,
04210

JUN	Gathering	03:00PM - 05:00PM
1	<hr/> Pinette Dillingham & Lynch Funeral Home & Cremation Services 305 Alfred Plourde Parkway PO Box 181, Lewiston, ME, US, 04240	

Comments



“ 20 files added to the album Lucy's Life



Paula Mikkelsen - May 17, 2019 at 02:56 PM



“ Love these! That smile! Cindy

Cindy - May 31, 2019 at 11:53 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Lucy and the Blue Angels



Susan Patneaude - May 16, 2019 at 09:26 PM



“ In May of 2016, Lucy was honored by our mayor, Jonathan LaBonte by Proclamation and the giving of the key to the city, at the Auburn City Council meeting. Lucy was so excited and honored, and completely taken with Jonathan! Her smile says it all! We will never forget you, Lucy. I love you and will miss you terribly. See you on the other side, sweet lady. ♡ Jan Biron



Jan Biron - May 16, 2019 at 08:13 PM



“ the Mayor LaBonte is my nephew

Jackie - May 17, 2019 at 06:53 PM



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Funeral Staff - May 15, 2019 at 05:46 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Young Lucy and Oak Hill



Funeral Staff - May 15, 2019 at 04:46 PM



“ What a beautiful lady she was.

Pauline Paladino - May 16, 2019 at 11:07 PM



“ Lucy is my very special friend. We worked together for many years doing the work of the Rebekahs. We enjoyed making posters of the President's program (the President of the Rebekah Assembly of Maine). We enjoyed going to our lodge meetings, in recent years, in the lodge room at the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Home on Caron Lane, Auburn, and to the musical programs there for the residents to enjoy. Phil House was her favorite. He plays piano at the HOME once a month. I have many other memories of being with her. Esther Tucker, Liberty #94

Esther Tucker - May 17, 2019 at 03:55 PM