

Audreta Brush, 93, DHS Class of '42, Avid Gardener, Cook, Second 'Mother' to Neighborhood Kids

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Categories : [Obituaries](#)

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A longtime resident of Rutland, Audreta "Joyce" (Trefry) Brush, 93, died June 19 in her home, accompanied by family, as was her fervent wish.

Joyce was born July 4, 1923, in Milford, the daughter of Homer H. and Vivian Audreta (Griswold) Trefry.

She graduated from Darien High School in 1942, where she was a member of the a capella vocal ensemble, and appeared as a thespian in her junior and senior plays. Joyce dearly loved singing, acting and theatre, and was voted "Class Talker," "Class Singer" and "Class Clown."

She studied drama as a member of the "Carolina Players" at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and worked briefly for the FBI, cataloging fingerprints of soldiers.

She moved to Vermont with her family during World War II, settling in East Dorset. Due to gas rationing, she traveled with her mother, sister, aunt and uncle to the American Fork & Hoe Co. in Wallingford, where they all made snowshoes.

— This [obituary](#) previously was published by the *Rutland Herald*. [Clifford Funeral Home](#) in Rutland, Vt. is handling arrangements.

Her family later opened a small restaurant known as "The Humpty Dumpty" in Manchester where she met her husband, Charles Henry "Harry" Brush, whom she married in 1949. Harry predeceased her in 1993.

Joyce was an inveterate shopper; she loved shopping and finding the ultimate bargain. She considered herself a "household engineer" and "playground supervisor," not only to her own five children, but to some 75-plus neighborhood children who considered her backyard the best place to play baseball, climb trees, snow slide and construct "buggies" of all shapes and sizes.

She patched up the wounded, provided snacks and drinks, broke up kiddie disputes and always made time to "listen." In her later years, she continued to be "Grammie B" to the kids on Hazel Street, always teaching, always listening to their stories and telling her own.

Joyce's love of theater inspired her to become a lifelong teller of stories, whether they were magical creations for bedtime or recollections from her own life and family. She instilled in her children a love of music and singing, learning about the world and a desire to travel beyond their beloved Vermont roots, as well as treasuring time when all the family could gather together.

Joyce will be remembered as an indefatigable corrector of spoken English and table manners. She also became an accomplished seamstress, making clothing, drapery and slipcovers for her family and home. She loved imaginative cooking.

Her friends, family and caretakers will remember most her beautiful flower gardens. Joyce always surrounded her home with flowers. Although raised as a Presbyterian, Joyce fully believed she did her best communicating with God on her knees in her flowerbeds, with the dirt of His earth under her fingernails. She passed her love of flower-laden yard and porch to her daughters and granddaughters.

Joyce is survived by her five children, David Brush (Val Brush) of Nebraska, Holly Webb (James Stacy) of Shrewsbury, Vt., Scott Brush of Colorado, Lisa Christman (Will Christman) of Pennsylvania, and Laird Brush (Karen Brush) of North Carolina, and a stepson, Charles Chahanovitch (Beverly Chahanovitch), of Washington.

She is also survived by nine grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews; and many step-grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In addition to her husband, Harry, she was predeceased by her sister, Patricia Hill; a niece, Judith Scheiber

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(Edmund Scheiber); a nephew, John Brush; and a step-granddaughter, Kelley Hendershot (Jeremy Hendershot).

Living to 93, her extended family was multi-generational — and she remembered the birthdays of so very many of them right up until she died. All her family was so important to her.

Joyce's lifelong wish was to remain in her home until her "time came," and this wish was made possible by the love and devotion of her family and all her wonderful and very much appreciated caretakers. The family also extends sincere thanks to Dr. Jeffrey Stall and his staff, RAVNAH nurses and staff, and Bayada nurses and staff.

There will be no calling hours. A celebration of life gathering for family and friends will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 18, at the Tinmouth Pond Pavilion in Tinmouth, Vt.

Memorial contributions, if desired, may be made to the Trinity Episcopal Church Flowers Fund, Trinity Church, 85 West St., Rutland, VT 05701.