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Audrey Dutcher, 99, Mother, Volunteer, Got Her Bachelor's Degree at Age 80

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Date : September 25, 2016

Audrey Josephine Smith Dutcher, a long-time resident of Closter, passed away at her home in Darien on Sept. 22. She was three months shy of her 100th birthday.

Darlenite daughter of Thomas Arthur Smith and Josephine Blanche Navarro Smith, Audrey was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., but the family moved to Closter before she turned five.
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<https://darlenite.com> displayed an almost limitless curiosity and thirst for learning. She skipped a grade and graduated from Closter High School in 1933, an honor student and recipient of the American Legion Auxiliary medal, awarded to the girl in the graduating class who was outstanding in citizenship, scholarship, and character.

After high school she was employed by the late David D. Ackerman, a Closter attorney, as stenographer and law clerk. Her responsibilities included the preparation of all legal papers pertaining to estates and foreclosure cases, and attendance at court.

From 1936 to 1942 she was employed by the Bank of New York in its Wall Street New York location, as private secretary to the late William R. Biggs, executive vice president in charge of security research and the bank's chief investment officer. During those years she also took courses in business and economics at New York University.

— [an obituary](#) from *Moritz Funeral Home*

In 1941, she married the late Kenneth Earle Dutcher of Nyack, N.Y. They made their home and raised their children in Closter, where Audrey was very involved in the community, serving as both a Girl Scout and a Cub Scout leader, as treasurer of St. Mary's Rosary Altar Society, as board member and secretary of the Closter Swim Club, and as chair of the Senior Citizen Hot Line Committee.

She took special pride in her work on the original Closter Ethics Commission which developed the Code of Ethics for the borough approved by the mayor and council in 1991. In the mid-to-late 1960s Audrey returned to her college studies, receiving an associates degree from Dominican College in Blauvelt, N.Y in 1970. After the death of her husband, she again returned to college, graduating in 1996 at the age of 80 from St. Thomas Aquinas College, in Sparkhill, N.Y, with a B.A. in liberal arts.

Audrey is predeceased by her sisters Margaret, Lillian and Theresa. She is survived by her children: daughter Jo Blanche of Stamford and son Kenneth Edward (Linda) of Park Ridge, N.J.; her cherished grandchildren, John, Stephanie and Kyle; her dearly loved brother, Thomas Smith of Brooklyn, N.Y.; and her beloved nieces and nephews.

Visiting hours will be at Moritz Funeral Home in Closter, N.J. from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 26. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 27 at St. Mary's Church in Closter.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the Closter Public Library or the [Alzheimer's Association](#).