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Shirley Gurliacci, 81, Longtime Darien Resident, Executive Assistant, Mother of Three

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Date : July 2, 2016

Shirley Jean (Brown) Gurliacci, died Thursday, June 30, at Meadow Ridge Senior Living in Redding. She was 81.

She was born Jan. 12, 1935 in Cyclone, Pa., to Clarence and Anna (Stanko) Brown (later Ann Ehrman), and grew up in Butler, Pa., attending a convent school and graduating from Butler High School in 1952. Shirley was named after Shirley Temple.

After the divorce of her parents, Shirley lived with her mother and her five siblings in the countryside in Butler. Their home had no electricity or hot water, but her mother supplemented state aid with a vegetable

garden, chickens and a milk cow.

As a very young child, she was invited by an aunt who worked as a governess for a New York Stock Exchange official to choose one stuffed animal from one of the many in the children's playroom while the executive's family was away. Shirley kept that big black dog for most of her life, later giving it to a relative. Her son, Mark, later became a director at the New York Stock Exchange.

She excelled in her high school classes, coming close to earning straight As, and her handwriting was beautiful. Shortly after graduating from school, she moved with her family to Stamford, where she began working in secretarial positions.

In 1958, she married the love of her life, Anthony. Their marriage lasted 57 years, until his death in 2015. Settling in Darien in 1963, they relocated to Medfield, Mass. in 1967, and back to Darien in 1977 where they lived until 2013, before moving into the Meadow Ridge Senior Living home in Redding.

For many years, she worked as an administrative assistant for an insurance broker in Massachusetts. Back in Connecticut, she was an administrative assistant for several employers, including the president of Comtrend, later ADP Comtrend, in Stamford.

She was an avid reader, an accomplished cook, a sometime gardener and very handy in sewing on a button or adding a seam to shorten a pair of pants. She and Tony were active in church groups and activities for decades.

In addition to her husband, she is predeceased by her parents and her brother, Charles Brown.

She leaves her sisters, Margaret Brown of Concord, Tenn., Lorraine Brown of Worcester, Mass., Donna O'Neill of New York City (and her husband, James), Edna Gelman of Westport (and her husband, Sheldon), and step-sister Shirley Brewer (and her husband, Carl) of Foxboro, Mass.; son, David Gurliacci of Stratford; daughter, Lisa Gurliacci Rubinstein of Tel Aviv (and her husband, Yoav); her son, Mark Gurliacci of Wilton (and his wife Ingrid); and John P. Gurliacci of Stratford, a cousin who lived with the family.

She is also survived by her two grandchildren Michael T. and Allison B. Gurliacci of Wilton, whom she loved deeply.

Friends may call from 5 to 8, p.m., Tuesday, July 5 at the Edward Lawrence Funeral Home, 2119 Post Rd., Darien, Conn. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at a 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, July 6, at St. John Roman Catholic Church, 1986 Post Road, Darien. Burial will follow at Spring Grove Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her name may be sent to the [American Diabetes Association](#), P.O. Box 11454, Alexandria, VA 22312 or 800-342-2383.