



Ethel Dunbar Doherty

August 3, 2024

The world lost one of its shining stars with the passing of Ethel Dunbar Doherty, 94, on August 3, 2024. She was the loving matriarch of her extended family, a lifelong activist for peace, equity and social justice and a hero to many across generations.

Ethel is survived by eight of her 10 children and their partners: Mimi Fox (Richard), Pat Tuccio, Kate Doherty, Judy Newton Doherty (Jack's widow), Moni Hoffman (Kevin's partner), Mick Doherty (Deb Chase), Theresa Doherty West (Mark), Julia Doherty (Dana Eubanks), Brigid Doherty and Larry Doherty. She is survived by her sister Ellen Syquia, and sister-and brother-in-law Peg (Doherty) and Earl Rieger. She leaves behind 17 grandchildren and their partners: Jed Fox & Kristina Hunter, Kam & Melissa Bruns, Lance Tuccio, Anthony & Cynthia Tuccio, John & Laurel McGeorge Iskander, Michael & Monica Iskander, Christopher Iskander, Kevin & Ashley Doherty, Katie Ryan Doherty, Victor West & Leann Terrier, Donny West & Lauren Kolb, Ryan & Tabatha Andrews, Daniel Andrews & Danielle Payne, Matthew Andrews, Jessy & Nicole Eubanks, Daniel Doherty & Rosie Soto, ten great-grandchildren and countless nieces, nephews and dear friends. She mourned the death of two beloved sons, Jack & Kevin Doherty, grandchildren Joseph Manuel Doherty & Mary Brigid Iskander and her sisters, Dorothy Kehoe, Ann Duchesne, and Rita Buckingham.

Ethel was born in Baltimore, Maryland on March 19, 1930, to John and Anna Dunbar. She was one of six Dunbar sisters. She had fond memories of a

house filled with music, the father who taught her to dance on a dime and the mother who shared an appreciation for the beauty of the natural world. After they moved to Bethesda, she fell in love with the boy across the street, John Doherty. He was her one true love and her partner through life. She left Wilson Teachers College in Washington DC to marry John when she was just 18. They spent the next 62 years together until his death in 2011, making their home in Maryland, France, Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Belgium, Portugal and Virginia.

After John's retirement from the State Department in 1979, they settled in Winchester. Some of the happiest days of Ethel's life were times with her children, precious grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She recently wrote, "My family is my finest accomplishment. The love and close connections through the generations give me the greatest joy of my entire life." She cherished the little ones, sat on the floor and entertained them for hours, walked colicky babies late into the night, devised learning games for the older kids, taught them about plants and trees and seashells, taught them to love their siblings, admired their artwork and their performances and listened to them talk about whatever interested them. She encouraged their curiosity, and instilled in them a love of reading and a love of learning. When in doubt, said one grandson, "Ask Grandma. She knows everything." She taught her children and grandchildren how to parent and grandparent. In the words of another grandson, "She and Grandpa taught us how to be good people, how to live with integrity, how to stand up and do the right thing."

What became a cherished tradition for Ethel, John and the entire family was the family beach week in North Carolina. For four plus decades, generations of the Doherty clan traveled south for beach week each summer. The headcount exceeded 40.

Ethel treasured friendships and created deep connections with people of all ages. Relationships forged in years of overseas living were important to her, especially with the church family from "Santa Lata" in Buenos Aires. She stayed in touch with high school friends, and made many new friends in the

decades in Winchester – fellow peace, social justice and political activists, dear neighbors, her church communities, book clubs and bridge groups. Her beloved Saturday Morning Group and the First Friday Lunch Bunch – a long standing monthly gathering of amazing women – provided fun and laughter, spiritual sustenance and emotional support.

Ethel was an active member of the Shenandoah Peace Coalition, the Coalition for Racial Unity and the Valley Interfaith Council. Her volunteer work included interpreting for Spanish speakers, teaching English and literacy, and supporting Hospice and the Boys and Girls Club.

Of all of the good work of her life, she was most proud of the petition campaign, which, with the help of many activists, succeeded in securing the release of two young men who had received unjustly long prison sentences. Her membership in the NAACP, her work with them on the sentencing case and on the restoration of rights were a source of deep satisfaction.

For the last fifteen years, Ethel made her spiritual home at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Shenandoah Valley. For the long years she graced this world, she inspired us. She taught us how to live, and ultimately how to die. She lives on forever in the hearts of all who love her.

Friends and family will gather from 4 -6 p.m. Friday, August 23, 2024 at Phelps Funeral Home, 311 Hope Dr., Winchester, VA. A Celebration of Life with reception to follow will take place at the Stephens City United Methodist Church, 5291 Main St, Stephens City, VA at 11 a.m. on Saturday August 24, the Reverend. Dr. John Copenhaver officiating.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Winchester Area NAACP, PO Box 2365, Winchester, VA 22604 or the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Shenandoah Valley, 6380 Valley Pike, Stephens City, VA 22655

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **23**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Phelps Funeral & Cremation Service
311 Hope Dr
Winchester, VA 22601
(540) 722-2424
travislnesselrodt@gmail.com
<https://phelpsfunerals.com>

Service

AUG **24**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Stephens City United Methodist Church
5291 Main Street
Stephens City, VA 22655

Tribute Wall

AM

“ Sending my Heartfelt Condolences to All the Family and Friends of Ethel Doherty. During the first years of my life, my family and Ethel's family spent a lot of time together in Maryland. I was born in Annapolis and we moved to Bethesda. So much fun walking with everyone down to the beach and spending time with the whole family. We all moved in different directions but still spent a lot of summers together in Maryland. I adored her and all the family. She made a big impact in my life and I've never forgotten.



Alicia McEnroe-Mamarella - August 22, 2024 at 07:31 PM

GM

“ To the family, Ethel was a very lovely and caring lady full of grace and mercy. We met through the NAACP as she fought the good fight for ex- felons right to vote. May she continue to rest peacefully, as her earthly work is done.

Gwendolyn Malone - August 17, 2024 at 11:08 AM

SH

“ I remember Ethel from church services at UUCSV in Stephens City, VA. She was a kind-hearted woman with a gentle smile.

Sandra Henry-Stocker - August 15, 2024 at 07:05 AM

DW

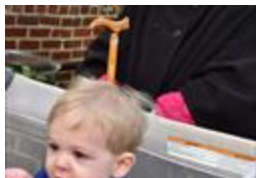
“ 1 file added to the album *First Friday Lunch Bunch(FFLB)*



Darlene Walker - August 14, 2024 at 09:15 PM

PT

“ 9 files added to the album *Ethel Doherty*



Patricia Tuccio - August 14, 2024 at 05:33 PM



“ 2 files added to the album *Brussels Friends*



James Guy - August 14, 2024 at 02:56 PM