



Irene M. (Lelakowski) Kellish

June 12, 1916 - December 27, 2016

Irene M. (Lelakowski) Kellish, age 100, of LaFayette-Pompey, passed away on Tuesday, December 27, 2016, peacefully in her home of 74 years surrounded by the people who loved her. She was predeceased by her husband, John, of 54 years in 1991; and survived by her son, Tom, and her daughter-in-law, Carol, and family members and many friends.

Irene was born in Syracuse on 6/12/16 to Ignatius and Sarafina Lelakowski, where she and her brother, Theodore Lelakowski, and sister, Genevieve (Lelakowski) Delcioppo, peddled newspapers along W. Genesee St. on "Automobile Row". She was educated by the Nuns at the School at Sacred Heart Church, known today as the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Her family moved to the farm on Berwyn Road in Pompey, the "Stone House" when she turned 16, where, at her birthday party, she met the love of her life, John Kellish (already living on a farm in Pompey) who was selected to play his fiddle with his group. They were married in 1937, and operated a number of farms, before they moved to their present farm in 1942, the year their son was born. In the early years "Rene" was adept at driving a John Deere tractor and a truck helping her husband in the fields.

Irene was initially employed manufacturing Kenmore sewing machines at New Process Gear in Syracuse, and then became one of the original "Rosie the Riveters" at Brown Lipe Chapin riveting headlight trim on General Motors

vehicles, while her husband tested machine guns on the rooftop of the building. In 1943 she moved back to New Process Gear, operating machines “on the line” until she retired in 1975 after 32 years. While there she lost a finger in the machines, but reported for work the following day. Throughout this period she assisted her husband on the farm, and if the “boys” were still in the fields when she got home from work, she would head start milking the cows. Then, supper on the table. Then, make cookies and/or crochet afghans. For the thousands of pounds of cookies she made over the years to sell or give away for all occasions she was known as the “Cookie Lady”. For the hundreds of afghans she made over the years, she will be remembered by many family members, friends and organizations using them for fund raising.

Irene always tried to stay involved in Immaculate Conception Church functions in Pompey, especially community picnics, and the Fabius-Pompey Senior Citizens Group. She was also active in cooking, gardening (flower and vegetable) and the family farm. She mowed her own lawn into her 80’s, and at her 80th birthday party, she only wanted a 5 HP lawnmower, and at her 90th party, she only wanted a “red” wheelbarrow, and at her recent 100th party, she only wanted to dance the polka to the live polka band, and to see her original 1940s John Deere tractor (which she did).

Irene was a beacon and inspiration to her family, friends, fellow employees, and community, and will be sorely missed by all.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Hospice Foundation of Central New York, 990 Seventh North St., Liverpool, NY 13088, or www.hospicecny.org.

A special thanks to Irene’s friends and final caregivers, Paula Ashley of Fabius, and Mary Ellen Kramek of LaFayette.

Cemetery Details

Immaculate Conception Cemetery

Cemetery Road
Pompey, NY 13138

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 12. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Ballweg & Lunsford Funeral Home - LaFayette
2584 Field Lane
LaFayette, NY 13084
(315) 677-3648
info@ballweg-lunsford.com
<https://www.ballweg-lunsford.com/>

Service

JUN 12. 12:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall



“ Tom and Carol -- I read the obit on Irene and attempted to call you, but couldn't locate a number. My sincere condolences. She lived a long life, worked hard, and thoroughly enjoyed her life with her family. Of course we will always remember "Cookie Lady". Even my kids recall her by that name and they were pretty young when they knew her. I hope her last years on earth were good to her. Please call me at 315 569-9725. Jack & Judy

January 11, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Tom and Carol, please accept our sincere condolences on the loss of your mother. She was a very special lady to her family, friends, community, and church. On the wings of angels may she join all her loved ones who have predeceased her.

January 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ So sorry to read about your mom, she always had a smile on her face and was quite a great lady. Our prayers and thoughts are with you in this difficult time.

Sincerely,
The Prindles
The Chamberlains

January 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ May "the hearer of prayer" continue to comfort your family, during this most difficult time.
The days ahead will become easier as you lean on those close to you. They will give your family the support and encouragement they need to stay strong.
We hope that the many cards, hugs, kind words, and loving prayers sustains your family
and grants them peace. (Philippians 4:6,7)

January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. She will missed by all. A wonderful woman! Wish I could have learned to polka as well as her...God's speed

Ichthys - January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM



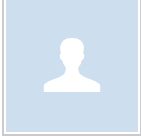
I dont remember Irene but when a kid in pompey I used to drive teddys truck to the farms back when every neighbor went farm to farm to harvest. The big thing for me was the meals put on for the threshers etc. I also worked for NPG sewing machine division on taylor st. wonderful family and many good times in the "stone ' house. RIP Irene Neill Agrasto Camillus

neil agrasto - June 07, 2017 at 01:43 PM



Tom and Carol So very sorry to learn of the passing of Tom's mother. On the wings of angels may she watch over you from heaven as she did on earth. Blessings and positive thoughts sent to your family.

Alan and Maureen Wrightsman - June 11, 2017 at 04:37 PM



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Dear Tom and Carol:

So sorry and sad to hear of Irene's passing. You both were good and faithful servants to the mother God gave you. I know in some ways it is harder and more painful for your loss and she has always been there....

Keeping you in thought and prayers...

Sincerely,

Pati Zangari

January 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM