



Mary Joan Gapp

April 21, 1937 - February 17, 2021

Mary Joan Gapp, nee Finch, beloved wife of the late Paul Gapp, former Architectural Critic at the Chicago Tribune; loving step-mother to Steve (Annette) Gapp and Leslie (Steve) Sharp of Oregon; proud grandmother of Jenny, Travis and Megan Gapp; loving aunt to Dave and Jimmy Clouse, Liz Stucker and Ann Peterson, Jen, Joe, Ben, and Dan Goldberg; devoted daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Finch; special sister to her remaining siblings, Betsy Jensen (Dick), Bob Finch, Polly Goldberg, and brother-in-law, Phil Clouse; and caring cousin to a slew of Finches and Lyons too many to enumerate. MJ's love affair with Chicago began when she started working and studying at the downtown campus of Loyola University. Her career in public relations began at Dale O'Brien & Co. Eventually, her interest in politics led to a job working for Senator Adlai Stevenson in his Chicago office. Her career path later moved her to the Chicago Tourism Council; and, in a final bid for independence, she helped create the PR firm of Clancy & Gapp. Upon her retirement, MJ lent some of her time and energy volunteering at Columbus Hospital. Always an avid reader, she also loved the arts and helped support the Art Institute and the Steppenwolf Theater. A strong sense of curiosity nurtured her love of travel--both within and outside of the United States. Unfortunately--despite a life filled with various intellectual pursuits, MJ ultimately succumbed to Alzheimer's disease and has spent the last five years of her life at the Mosaic Lakeshore Healthcare Center. Throughout this time, she was able to retain a fair amount of her comprehension and her sharp

sense of humor, but she suffered greatly from short-term memory loss. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association of Chicago or any charity of your choice. For information regarding her funeral service, please contact the Barr Funeral Home at 773-743-4034.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

FEB **23**. 10:30 AM (CT)

St Ita Catholic Church
1220 W Catalpa
Chicago, IL 60640

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Joan Gapp*

October 08, 2023 at 11:31 AM



“ *Mary Jo or M.J. , as I knew her, was a dear friend of my sister Bonnie Callaghan. My name is Terry and I am Bonnie's youngest sister. I remember MJ as a tall, thin red head with a great sense of humor and always a fun and interesting person. Bonnie and MJ lived together in their early twenties in a "Coach House" in Old Town in Chicago. I used to visit them when I was an older teen. I remember MJ working for Mr. Stevenson for years and then Bonnie worked for him after. I remember hearing her husband won a Pulitzer and how exciting it was to even know "someone who knew someone" let alone be related to them. After Bonnie. died I tried to keep in touch but could tell even tho MJ tried she truly did not remember me. My daughter just texted that Mr. Stevenson died and she thought of Aunt Bonnie. I of course thought of Bonnie but couldn't think of her without remembering her very dear friend MJ. She remember her talking about her loving family> Polly and her sisters and brother. I have wonderful memories of their friendship and love of Chicago. My sincere condolences to her family. I will keep her and you in my prayers. So sorry I did not know earlier.*

theresa Giblin - September 07, 2021 at 11:13 PM

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“ MJ was my mentor when starting out here in Chicago. I worked with MJ in Senator Stevenson’s office and just loved her. She was funny, thoughtful and direct. We had many wonderful conversations and shared experiences. She got to know my family and I knew Paul. Thank you MJ for being a wonderful friend and guide. Anna Quinlan.

Anna Quinlan - March 13, 2021 at 09:52 AM