



Mary Ellen O'Connell

April 23, 2025

Mary Ellen O'Connell, cherished mother and grandmother, passed away peacefully just shy of her 88th birthday surrounded by her loving family on Wednesday April 23, 2025 in Point Pleasant, New Jersey. Affectionately known as "Eileen" and "Eilo," she was daughter of Irish immigrants born in the Bronx, to Charles O'Connell and Nellie Stanton who immigrated from Cork, Ireland.

She was predeceased by her parents and her older brother, George "Mickey" O'Connell, with whom she shared countless memories of growing up in a vibrant Irish community with many relatives centered around Gaelic Park, where the Irish of New York had a formidable presence.

More than anything else, Eileen was most proud of her seven children who she raised lovingly as a single parent in Cresskill, New Jersey. She faced this challenge with remarkable courage and determination. She Worked tirelessly to provide for her family. Eileen was the "rock" and cornerstone of her family. Her dignity and strength of character defined her approach to life's challenges and Eileen managed to provide experiences many single-parent households couldn't afford including vacations and camps. Her generosity extended beyond her own family where she always had her door open for everyone.

Later in life, when her beloved father became ill, Eileen demonstrating the same selfless devotion she showed her children to care for him. Her success as a parent is evident in the lives of her children. All seven grew up to have successful careers and beautiful families an achievement that filled her with quiet pride. Her family expanded to include her 19 grandchildren whom she loved deeply, and she attended as many of their activities and events as possible, no matter the distance.

After retiring from her dedicated career Eileen spent her golden years at the Jersey Shore, surrounded by the family she cherished so deeply. Her passion for all things Irish never waned, from her unwavering support of Notre Dame Football (Go Irish!) and Cork Hurling (Up Cork!) to her love of traditional Irish music and lively family gatherings, always with the singing of Irish songs .

Eileen will be deeply missed. She is survived by her children, Ellen Senese and her husband John John Dowling and his wife Sharon, Chuck Dowling and his wife Pam,

Patrick Dowling and his wife Teri, Liam Dowling and his wife Kathy Maggie Connolly and her husband Mike and James Dowling, her 19 grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

A wake will be held at Barrett's Funeral Home in Tenafly on Friday, May 2, from 4 – 8 pm. A Funeral Mass of Christian Burial will be held at St. Therese Church in Cresskill on Saturday, May 3 at 9:30 am. Burial will immediately follow at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Hawthorne, New York.

May she be welcomed into heaven with open arms by those who departed before her, for a celebration like no other. Godspeed, Eileen O'Connell. Slán abhaile – safe home.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 2. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Barrett Leber Funeral Home
148 Dean Dr
Tenafly, NJ 07670
(201) 568-8043
<https://www.barrettleberfuneralhome.com/>

Funeral Mass

MAY 3. 9:30 AM (ET)

St. Therese of Lisieux Church
120 Monroe Ave
Cresskill, NJ 07626-1405
(201) 567-2528

Interment

MAY 3 (ET)

Gate of Heaven Cemetery
10 W Stevens Ave
Hawthorne, NY

Tribute Wall

BM

“ I have many happy memories of hanging at the Dowlings' place, with Mary Ellen right in the middle of things. She always made me feel welcome, and she loved her family. My condolences on your loss. Best, Bill McGagh

Bill McGagh - May 02, 2025 at 02:09 PM



“ We will miss Mrs. D for sure. She always inserted her signature laugh in every conversation. The matriarch of a truly great family.

Richard Arscott - April 30, 2025 at 06:27 PM

SO

“ Collective Condolences from the O'Sullivans of Blarney (George's kids). We all remember Eileen when she visited Ireland. I remember her hearty laugh. Other comments from siblings on seeing her obituary are "she has a strong look of Charlie" (her dad who we would have known very well) and "a single mother to 7. Fair play to her". RIP Eileen.

Sinead OSullivan - April 30, 2025 at 03:05 PM

TM

“ To the entire Dowling family we send our deepest sympathy at your loss. May all your happy memories help during this difficult time

Thomas & Mary Murray Yonkers, NY



Thomas and Mary Murray - April 29, 2025 at 07:23 PM

HB

“ They don't build em like this anymore, tough as nails and breathtakingly generous.

Condolences The Boyd Family

Howard Boyd - April 29, 2025 at 03:16 PM

CM

“ Deepest condolences to you all at this very sad time, such a lovely lady and a wonderful mother, I hope you find comfort in your wonderful memories
Love from Catherine (Dowling) , Julian & Family

catherine mccormick - April 27, 2025 at 12:39 PM

SD

“ I have great memories of Auntie Eileen when she came to live in Ireland for a short while, when I was a child many years ago. She always seem to smiling and in good humour. I know she was a super and much loved Mother to all you Guy's and her memorie will stay with you forever. My Condolences to all the Family from my family in Cork, Ireland Sean Dowling.

Sean Dowling - April 27, 2025 at 09:43 AM

FD

“ I have many fond memories of Auntie Eileen. I remember when she took me in to her home in 1986 and along with her father Charlie, looked after me when I was along way from home. I also remember fondly our last meeting down on the Jersey Shore 2 years ago. As they say, “she was some woman, for one woman’. Condolences to all the family at this sad time. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hAnam - may she rest in peace ❤️. Finbarr Dowling

Finbarr Dowling - April 26, 2025 at 02:39 PM

SC

I remember enjoying pleasent days in NK with Charlie, Eileen and all the Dowling Clan when I lived in New York. The hospitality and kindness was much appreciated and will never be forgotten. May Eileen rest in peace.
Siobhan OSullivan Dublin and Spiddal Galway

Siobhan OSullivan daughter of Eileens co - April 29, 2025 at 08:49 PM

BS

May Eileen Rest in Peace. We raised our children in a great town and a great period of time. Eileen was always there to help and comfort all. I will always treasure her kind smile and laughter. Barbara and John Schwartz

barbara schwartz - May 03, 2025 at 06:47 PM