



Mary Rose Ray

June 23, 1917 - December 23, 2012

Mary Rose Noel Ray passed away Dec. 23, 2012, at the Ponds in Lincolnshire. She was born in 1917, on the northwest side of Chicago to Marie and Phillip Noel. As a child, she and her family raised a pet alligator named Alexis in their home. Alexis was a valued member of the family for 18 years. Mary graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1934, and North Park Junior College in 1936, where she was one of the first of four female cheerleaders at the North Park Junior College. She then graduated with a bachelor of science in journalism from Northwestern University in 1938. She was a member of Theta Sigma Phi, the national journalism sorority. After graduating, she worked for the Boy Scouts of America. In 1942, Mary Rose began a 40 year career at American Airlines beginning at Midway Airport as a public relations assistant before leaving in the early 50's to work for American Airlines in downtown Chicago, transferring to O'Hare for the rest of her career. At the time, American Airlines was the only airline with a press room. She met many traveling dignitaries and Hollywood celebrities. The Archbishop of Canterbury, John Cardinal Cody, Indirah Gandhi, King Peter of Yugoslavia, King Umberto, Prince Phillip, Frank Sinatra, Helen Hayes, Carol Channing, Jimmy Stewart, Arthur Hailey and the Dave Clark Five were just a few of the travelers that passed through Noel's office. She met presidents Eisenhower, Nixon, Kennedy, Johnson and Carter. In July 1979, near the end of her career, she was tasked with handling the public relations aspect of the crash of American Airlines Flight 191, where 275 passengers perished. She was awarded with

the Press Woman of the Year for work in handling of the public relations relating to the crash. That same year she handled the public relations of the hijacking of an American Airlines plane by two Serbian terrorists. She retired from American Airlines in September 1979 and continued working as a travel writer, traveling around the world. Mary Rose was once spotlighted in Glamour Magazine as one of six leaders in the newly-important career in public relations. She was chosen as a leader in transportation and received many awards and citations in her long career. Mary Rose married Russell V. Ray in 1952. They resided in Libertyville and wintered in Long Boat Key for many years. She was a member of the St. Joseph Catholic Church in Libertyville. She is survived by her brother-in-law, James L. Ray; nieces, Peg Ray, Liz Miles and Nancy Cummins; four great-nieces; five great-nephews; four great-great-nieces; and one great-great-nephew. Mary was preceded in death by her husband, Russell V. Ray; her parents; brother, Dick Noel; sister, Patricia Noel; niece, Wendy DeJaeger; and nephew, Robert Ray. A Mass of Christian Burial will take place at 10 a.m. Friday, Jan. 4, at St. Joseph Church, 121 E. Maple Ave., Libertyville, IL 60048. Memorials may be made to a charity of one's choice. Arrangements were made by the Burnett-Dane Funeral Home, Libertyville. For information, call 847-362-3009 or sign the guest book www.burnettdane.com.

Tribute Wall



“ *May joy soon replace the sorrow that's in your heart, with cherished memories.*

April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM



“ *I remember Mary Rose from working at O'Hare airport in the 60's and 70's*

David Temples - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM



“ *I was a flight attendant for AA for 34 years and remember Rose with tender thoughts. Photos of Harold Lloyd, Marlon Brando are in my rogues gallery thanks to Mary Rose. She had such a personable way of dealing with all the celebrities. I am sorry for our loss.*

Barbara Joabson

Barbara Joabson - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM



“ *We knew Mary Rose from the Bull Valley Golf Club. She was always there with a smile on her face, ready to join every party. Her stories of her past were always entertaining. She will be missed by all who know her*

stephanie & tom paulsen - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM

RD

“ Mary Rose was the best of the best. She was American Airlines to many of the travelers in/out of Chicago. Old school with old fashion values. She was a legend in her time...RIP dear lovely lady. Keep the bench warm...we'll see you soon. What a Chicago reunion it will be. Ray Dean AA CHI '78-'81

Ray Dean - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM

RB

“ It was my sincere pleasure to have known Mary Rose!

Ron Barton - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM

BB

“ Iremember Mary Rose at O'Hare always with a smile on her face, and if she had a moment would take time to talk. She did such a wonderful job with such grace! What a terrific asset to our company!

Barbara Beckert - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM

MF

“ One of my fondest childhood memories is of Mary Rose and what a tremendous sense of humor that she had. She was truly a woman before her time. I still have one of the Mexican dresses that she gave to my mother and it is still just as pretty today as it was then.

Mimi Rotunno Ferrara - April 27, 2018 at 06:43 AM