



Miss Shirley Elizabeth Gantz

September 19, 1920 - August 29, 2012

Born in Denver 9/19/1920 to Mary Elizabeth Miller Gantz and Marvin E. Gantz. Her mother died when she was about 2 years old; her father remarried to Alicia Gantz, and Shirley was raised by Marvin and Alicia. She was very close to her parents and often told touching stories about her relationship with them.

Shirley's oft quoted life optimist philosophy was "hope for the best, prepare for the worst".

She earned a BA from the University of Denver, and did graduate work in international relations.

She was in the WACs from 1943-1945 stationed at Mitchell Field, Long Island, NY. When she was discharged, she got a job with a Long Island publishing company at a weekly newspaper - the Manhasset Mail Paper -- working as the social editor, and then promoted to editor.

In 1947 she returned to Denver for a couple of years. In 1949 she joined the Economic Cooperation Administration [ECA] which was established to administer the Marshall Plan, helping to rebuild Europe after WWII. After completing an internship there, she took the Civil Service exam and received a permanent position with the government. Shirley remarked that she "typed

her way through life” because of the many writing positions she held in her career. One of them was “The Shield” published by the HR department of the ECA, the communication for members of the foreign service.

During Shirley’s career with the federal government, she had a number of memorable encounters. One of them was Shirley having lunch with Hubert Humphrey’s sister when President Kennedy was shot in Dallas

Because of health issues, she retired early from her federal government position. Her next position was with the Regional Planning Council in Baltimore. When she retired from that job she became a volunteer. She worked with the Arthritis Foundation and was named Volunteer of the Year for 1982.

She lived at Keswick’s Carey House for years and was an active volunteer there as well, earning her 5 year volunteer pin. She was recognized with the “Unsung Hero” award, a prized possession in her life.

Shirley had a gentle sense of humor, which made her a nice person to be with. She enjoyed writing and her work included a lovely children’s book called “Robby the Robot” as well as many poems.

She was an avid reader of mystery books and novels. One of her favorite authors – Maeve Binchy – preceded her in death by a short time. Shirley also kept up on the news, politics, and the arts. Until she died she was a subscriber to The New Yorker.

When Carey House closed Shirley moved to The Wesley retirement community and later to the Presbyterian Home of Maryland in 2007 where she lived until her move to Keswick in 2011. Returning to Keswick when she

needed nursing care was like coming “home”. She had a number of friends there – both residents and staff [from the Carey House days]. Shirley attended activities and religious services there. Until the day she died, Shirley remained engaged in the world, interested in helping others, and continued to write poetry.

Spiritually she was a follower of the Christian Scientist movement. Her library included works by Mary Baker Eddy, and several copies of the bible.

She is survived by her sister-in-law Mary Lou Gantz, and many friends.

A favorite quote:

“How glorious the raging sea, the awesome power of nature's wrath, more glorious still the power of love that leads us home on safer paths.”

-Unknown