



## Edith Rita Samuels

May 29, 1933 - November 29, 2022

EDITH SAMUELS (May 29, 1933—November 29, 2022)

Edith Rita Schlussselberg Samuels passed away peacefully on the evening of November 29. A lover of theater, folk art, and Jewish theological argument, Edith will be remembered and missed by friends and family around the world.

Edith was born in Brooklyn in 1933, and grew up loving the Brooklyn Dodgers, Jackie Robinson, Benny Goodman, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and Thelonious Monk. Edith graduated from Midwood High School in 1949 at the age of 16, and attended Vassar College, where she made life-long friends. Although Edith was a member of the class of 1953, she took a hiatus and didn't graduate until 1956. Edith met her husband Hershel Samuels on a blind date arranged by one of her college friends. Smitten by their mutual cheese-ophilia and his easy going manner, Edith carried on a long, letter-writing romance with Hershel as he completed medical school in Canada. The two married in January of 1954, and remained married for 64 years until his death in 2018. During that time, they attended thousands of Broadway, off-Broadway, and off-off-Broadway shows, museum exhibits, concerts, and lectures.

After a brief stint in publishing, Edith dedicated herself to raising her children, which of course none of them appreciated. Later, feeling herself part of a

transitory generation of feminists, Edith returned to school to earn a Masters Degree in psychology. Her perfectionism made it virtually impossible for her to let go of her thesis, and her advisor ultimately demanded that she simply give him her hand-written draft as the final submission. She worked for many years in testing and assessment, creating professional certification exams for Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, and other allied fields. As well, she worked for many years at the Flatbush Development Corporation, managing their apartment-finding program, and worked for many years at the UJA/Federation. Later in life she turned her energy toward learning more about the Old Testament and Jewish customs and to collecting family genealogical information. She often said that in another life she might have been a rabbi. She was a true New York Liberal, and worked tirelessly on the political campaigns of both Shirley Chisholm and Elizabeth Holtzman.

Edith was loyal to a fault. She fostered lifelong friendships. Jeremiah did her hair for decades. A typical morning began with a couple of hours of phone calls from the wall phone by the kitchen table to friends and family to catch up on life events and make plans. She completed the New York Times crossword puzzle almost every day. Her six favorite words in the English language were "Let me speak to your manager." Expert at seeing possibilities but less so at decisively acting on them, her motto was "Keep your options open."

Edith is survived by five children, Karen (Lewis/Jeffrey), David (Karen), Paul (Lisa), Judie (Paul), and Alex (Teri), two grandchildren (Avery, Jack), and two step-grandchildren (Nat, Will). She was predeceased by her parents, Abraham and Bessie Schlusberg, and a daughter, Barbara.

Graveside service and burial to take place at Mt. Lebanon Cemetery, Queens, NYC, on Wednesday, Dec. 7. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to the Alzheimer's Association are appreciated.



# Cemetery Details

## Mount Lebanon Cemetery

7800 Myrtle Ave.  
Quuens, NY 11385

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

DEC 7 (ET)

Mount Lebanon Cemetery  
7800 Myrtle Ave.  
Quuens, NY 11385

*Graveside service and burial to take place at Mt. Lebanon Cemetery, Queens, NYC, on Wednesday, Dec. 7.*

# Tribute Wall

SW

“ *Edith and Hershel were dear friends of ours when they lived in Brooklyn and we were on Long Island. Our friendship started in a Yiddish class at the Workmen's Circle and continued beyond that for years. They came on our boat many times.*

*Sadly, when they moved to Cincinnati and we retired to Florida, it was harder to keep in touch.*

*We were so sorry to learn of Edith's passing through a notice in the New York Times. We send our sincerest condolences to all the Samuels family members.*

*We will keep our beautiful memories of our times with Edie and Hershel close to our hearts. They are together again, and we hope they are at peace.*

*Sharon and Eddie Wigutoff*

---

**Sharon and Ed Wigutoff** - December 05, 2022 at 12:02 PM

PB

“ *I am a fellow member of the Bible Babes, a group of women led in Bible study by Susan Aranoff in Brooklyn. I remember Edith's keen interest in Jewish history and tradition. Her knowledge and enthusiasm contributed much to my enjoyment of the class.*

*May her memory be for a blessing.*

*Priscilla Balch*

---

**Priscilla Balch** - December 02, 2022 at 12:18 AM

SA

“ Edith was a caring and kind person and was blessed with a clever sense of humor. She was an avid student of Judaism and Jewish texts. Edith had a tremendous love of learning. As part of our weekly "Bible Babes" Jewish studies class in Brooklyn, she enriched our study sessions with illuminating "takes" and insights regarding the texts we were studying. As Edith used to say: she might have been a rabbi if times had been different when she was young.

Edith had a hobby of making beautiful miniature models of various scenes covered by a sparkling protective glass dome. Not long before she moved from Brooklyn, she gifted me a beautiful model of the table set for our weekly "Bible Babes" class complete with miniaturized copies of several of the books that we had studied. I am thankful that I have such a beautiful, "created with love" memento of my friendship and study partnership with Edith. May her memory be a blessing.

*Susan Aranoff*

---

**Susan Aranoff** - December 01, 2022 at 10:31 PM