



Esther Root

August 1, 1931 - December 4, 2025

Esther (Soltzman) Root, originally of Winnipeg, MB, Canada, passed away on December 4, 2025. Esther was born on August 1, 1931, to the late Roy and May (Olin) Soltzman. She lived an interesting and full life as she lived in eight countries on four continents over the span of her 94 years. Esther always engaged fully in whichever community she lived, always motivated to create a strong community for herself and those in the city in which she lived.

Along with her parents, she is preceded in death by her much-loved husband, Samuel I Root.

Esther is survived by her children Sharon (Walter) Spiegel, Malcolm (Lori) Root, Joel (Donna) Root. Grandmother to Alan (Regan) Root, Rachel (Matthew) Dryer, Jeremy Spiegel, Shira (Joshua) Bobo, Jacob (Julia) Spiegel, Aaron Root, and Benjamin Root. Loving Great-Grandmother to Mason, Landon, Rennyn, and Lylah Root, Briella and Liam Dryer. She is also survived by her sister Jacqueline (Soltzman) Stillwater.

Esther was raised and educated in Winnipeg, Canada, where she received a B.A. degree in liberal arts from the University of Manitoba. Realizing that she would be the main support for her husband Sam when he went to graduate school, she then attended a business college and studied bookkeeping-accounting. They moved to Calgary, Alberta after they married in 1952. While

her husband was drilling oil wells in the Yukon, she worked as a bookkeeper for a saddlery company, this being the booming Wild West. In 1954 they moved to Columbus, Ohio so Sam could complete a PhD degree in geology at The Ohio State University. She worked there as a bookkeeper and took classes at The Ohio State. She recalls that Sam received a letter from the dean congratulating him on his wife's 4.0 grade point average. In 1956 their daughter Sharon was born and in 1957 they moved to Bogotá, Colombia where Sam worked as an exploration geologist for an international oil company. Here she mastered Spanish, Latin cuisine, and a society not prepared to accept talented and independent women. Her two sons, Malcolm and Joel, were born there. Despite revolutions, tropical disease, and relative isolation with sporadic mail being the principal means of communication home to Canada, she created a warm and flourishing home and circle of friends. In 1961 Sam was transferred to Talara, Peru, an isolated, relatively small oil camp on the Peruvian coast. Despite its location, life was rich among the expatriates and Peruvian management personnel. She made lifelong friends there whom she treasured.

In 1964 she moved to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania where Sam became head of geologic mapping for the Pennsylvania State Geologic Survey. One impetus to move was her desire for the three children to have the American experience and culture. She immersed herself in the Harrisburg community and became active in a number of organizations, including serving as regional president of the National Council of Jewish Women. Utilizing her psychology degree, she taught basic living skills in the State Mental Hospital to prepare patients to enter society after discharge. Lack of funding eventually terminated the program and she was then recruited to be the Executive Director at Beth El Temple. She also perfected her Bridge and Mahjong games and became the teacher to several groups, while raising three active teenagers.

In 1978, after her youngest child went off to college, she and Sam moved to

Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. With the children in college in the states, she had the opportunity to become active in several organizations addressing poverty and women's issues. She and Sam explored Brazil and she added Portuguese to her language skills.

Life brought them back to Ohio as Sam joined the College of Wooster faculty. Here Esther became active in Every Woman's House and a number of other local organizations including the Knesseth Israel Temple. During sabbatical years, she and Sam resided in England, Israel, and Spain. After retirement, they traveled extensively and wintered in Florida. In 2017 they eventually moved permanently to The Villages, Florida where they lived together in mature love until 2020 when Sam passed. Esther continued her positive attitude and extremely social outlook independently in The Villages until her final move to Cincinnati in 2023 to be closer to family.

Despite her far-flung travels, the center of Esther's world was always her family. She took an active interest in everything related to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Until recently reaching the point where she could no longer travel, she never missed a family simcha, reveling in family weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, graduations, and holidays. Through all the years and adventures, her favorite role was as Grandma and Gigi.

A celebration of life will be held Thursday, December 11 at 7:00pm at The Summit of Blue Ash – 4351 Sycamore Creek Dr. Blue Ash (in Summit Park).

Memorial contributions may be made to National Council of Jewish Women (<https://www.ncjw.org/act/action/help-us-today-by-donating/>) or Knesseth Israel Temple, Wooster, OH (www.kitemple.org).

We learn from her long and varied life to always be willing to look at life with a

positive attitude. Be flexible in your willingness to have experiences. And make friends wherever you go. Life will then reward you richly.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

DEC 11. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

The Summit of Blue Ash
4351 Sycamore Creek Drive
Blue Ash, OH 45242

Tribute Wall

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“*Esther was a special friend in Harrisburg. When we met she gave me wonderful ideas to help me raise our children. Connie and I send you much love. She will be missed*

Gail and Connie Siegel - December 08, 2025 at 07:52 PM