



Frederika Leston

January 26, 1917 - March 31, 2013

On Easter Sunday, March 31st, 2013, Frederika Leston fell 7 years short of her stated goal of living to be 103 years old! Born in Amsterdam, Holland on Jan. 26th, 1917 the daughter of fabric merchant Jacques Polak and wife Lyn, “Freddy” had an idyllic childhood in the Dutch countryside which she fondly and frequently remembered. Her younger years ended abruptly during World War II, with the loss of most of her family in the Holocaust, including her father, mother, younger sister Eva, and first husband Sal Kuyt. Freddy and her brother Jo spent these years in hiding, one step ahead of the Nazis, and miraculously survived using their wits and determination, and with the help of a few loyal friends. Freddy’s video testimony was given to The Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation founded by Steven Spielberg in 1994. Her story also appears in print in “When They Came To Take My Father,” a collection of narratives edited by Leora Kahn and Rachel Hager in 1996.

Freddy immigrated to the US in 1947, arriving in New York City where she met her second husband Ernst Radt, a former judge in pre-war Germany and then Wall Street broker. Their only child, daughter Evelyn, was born in April of 1952. They took up residence in Cold Spring Harbor on the north shore of Long Island in the days when the area mostly consisted of farmland. Ernst died suddenly in 1957 of a heart attack on the morning commute to his office. Freddy eventually remarried and moved to Manhattan near Central Park, in the mid 60’s. Husband Paul Leston, an international insurance broker, died in

1972. Eight years later, Freddy was widowed a fourth time upon the death of Stanley Rennert, an entrepreneur who started his own manufacturing business in NYC, after immigrating to the US from Romania. Stanley shared Freddy's love of nature and the countryside around the Towanda area and visited here frequently. He died on Thanksgiving Day in 1980.

Freddy loved fresh air and sunlight, flowers, photography, painting, jazz, long walks and good food. She was proficient in four languages and loved traveling back to Europe to visit cousins in Holland and Switzerland whenever possible. Freddy spent many summers living in Eagles Mere after the birth of her 2 grandchildren and most recently resided at the Personal Care Home in Towanda.

Preceded in death by younger brother Jo in 1972, Freddy most loved spending time with her "little family" and is survived by daughter Evelyn and "favorite" son-in-law Pat Sherburne of Towanda, Grandson Aaron and wife Lauren Sherburne of Pequannock, NJ, Granddaughter Abby Stroud of Towanda, and 4 beautiful great-grandchildren – Jocelyn, Jason, Matthew and Nicolas. Her extended family includes special friends Ruth Rennert (step-daughter), Hazel Harber, Collette Koster (sister-in-law), Jake Stroud, Gerardo Brown and fellow Holocaust survivors Ina and Jack Polak.

Freddy's family greatly appreciates the exemplary care and loving support given her by the doctors, staff and aides at the Personal Care Home of Memorial Hospital in Towanda, the Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, Ashton Healthcare in Athens, Guardian Home Health Care, and special angels Vicki Wells and Connie Craig. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations in Freddy's memory be sent to The Anne Frank Center USA, Attn: Development Department, 44 Park Place, New York, NY 10007. Date and time of graveside memorial service to be announced.

Memories and condolences may be expressed and shared by visiting www.bowenfuneralhomes.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Frederika Leston*

October 22, 2023 at 08:10 PM



“ *Frederika Leston*

October 08, 2023 at 10:34 PM



“ *Frederika Leston*

October 06, 2023 at 09:57 AM



“ *Frederika Leston*

October 06, 2023 at 03:29 AM



“ *Frederika Leston*

October 05, 2023 at 02:02 PM

RR

“ *That's Freddy front and center as she should be!*

Ruthie's favorite Freddy photo



Ruth Rennert - April 15, 2013 at 12:56 PM

RR

“ *My beautiful and very special stepmother and friend,*

Freddy Leston Rennert,

died yesterday, Sunday, March 31, 2013 around 7 P.M.

I was and am very lucky to have Freddy and her children

and her children's children and their children in my life!

Ruth Rennert

Ruth Rennert - April 14, 2013 at 08:48 PM

JC

“ Evelyn, I will always remember your Mom's warmth going back to our school days. But the happiest memories are of our "cold on the outside, warm on the inside" New Year's celebrations that we all shared at her home on 72nd Street. These evenings brought together so many parts of my life---my best school friends, college friends, our husbands, and your kids. Steve and I send our deepest sympathies to you and Pat and everyone else. Your Mother lived a miracle and in return, you gave her the joy of getting back the joyous family life she had lost so long ago.

Jane H. Cuzzo - April 13, 2013 at 04:23 PM

PS

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Pat Sherburne - April 10, 2013 at 08:21 AM

LB

Dear Evelyn & Pat:

Peter and I were so sorry to hear about Freddy. She was such an special person who led such an amazing life. I loved hearing all her stories.

Freddy was always like a ray of sunshine. My memories will be of all the times she walked all over the city wearing her hat, meeting her for dinners with Ruthie and the wonderful trip to Eagles Mere.

Freddy so much enjoyed being a part of your lives, your children's lives, Ruthie's life and now the Great Grandchildren lives.

Both of you have been so wonderful taking care of her these last few years and making her life the best that it could be.

Our thoughts are with all of you.

Sincerely,

Lin & Peter

Lin & Peter Bermas - April 24, 2013 at 12:17 PM