



Barbara Burke Bradley

May 10, 2026

Barbara Burke Bradley 1935 - 2026

Barbara Burke Bradley died May 10, 2026 in her home town of West Hartford, CT. She passed peacefully in her sleep at the age of 91.

She was born Barbara Roberta Burke in New York City, the third of four children to first generation Irish immigrants, all of whom she had survived in life. Her father William served forty years in the NYPD while her mother Marie raised two boys and two girls in Queens. While attending a Catholic girls school, Barbara helped support the family working as a nanny for a wealthy family on 5th Avenue.

Given the limited career choices for women at the time, “teacher, nun or nurse” she would long lament, Barbara chose the latter and attended Flowers Fifth Avenue Nursing School and post-graduation took a position there after graduating. There she met a medical student named Donald Bradley, a bright blue-eyed, blue-blooded Connecticut Yankee in November of 1953.

Barbara and Don would marry in 1956, and in 1958 after one year internship and the birth of their first son, Donald III, the Army deployed Don to Germany and Italy for the next 3 years. Upon their return to the States they moved to Buffalo, NY where Don would complete a surgical residency and Barbara

would bring the family two more sons, Burke and Ian.

After Don's residency the young family moved to Wethersfield, CT briefly until finally settling in West Hartford in 1969. For several decades, she served Hartford Hospital first in the Women's Auxiliary and eventually as a Medical Librarian. Barbara battled and beat breast cancer twice and remained a vibrant force of nature nearly to the end. She is preceded in death by her husband Don in 2018 and will be buried with him in a private ceremony.

Barbara leaves behind her three sons, their wives, eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren. She will be remembered best for her uniquely Irish resilience and grace, for her quiet strength as a "Doctor's Wife" and parent-in-chief for her three strong-willed sons. Her boys lost their rock. Her love and support for them never wavered. It was never loud or performative but always quiet, ever-present, and like gravity itself, permanent. No matter their age or predicament, they knew they were never alone in any fight. One tough and loving Irishwoman always had their backs.

Tribute Wall

KF

“ Sincere condolences to all the Bradley & Burke family on the recent passing of Barbara. I met Don & Barbara in 2000 in New York with my parents, the late John & Maura Fahy of Ardrahan, County Galway. Barbara was a cousin of my late Mother, Maura Fahy (née Byrne) and they always kept in contact. She was a lovely lady and her thoughtfully written obituary gave us a great insight into her life , character and resilience. Attached are some photos taken from her last visit to Ireland in September, 2014. May she rest in peace and she is now reunited with her beloved husband, Don

Kieran & Johanne Fahy (Chicago, IL)



Kieran Fahy - May 18 at 08:48 PM