



## Frances Swaller Friedman

May 24, 2024

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When Queen Elizabeth died in 2022, our mother Frances Swaller Friedman quipped, “We look alike. We must be related.” And that is Franny in a nutshell. Despite not having an ounce of royal blood (likely having been descended from potato farmers in Vilna), Franny Friedman was indeed a queen – and, in fact, was as intelligent, elegant, sophisticated, beautiful, and dignified as any member of Buckingham Palace. So it is with uncommon sadness, and lots of tears, that we bid adieu to our West Hartford queen, who after living life to the fullest for 96 joyful years, met her maker on May 24, 2024 (after valiantly fighting late-diagnosed pancreatic disease).

Franny (Fagie) was born on Barbour Street in Hartford on December 3, 1927 to her devoted Yiddisha parents Sarah and Phillip Swaller. She was a proud graduate of Weaver High School in 1945, married the love of her life, the witty “Carpet King” Eddy Friedman in 1947, and they had a storybook romantic adventure until Eddy’s death in 2021 (more on that later).

Fran was a wonderful wife and mom, and much more. As an early subscriber to Ms. Magazine and a volunteer at Planned Parenthood, she was an iconoclast, irreverent, a questioner, and an inspiration to everyone. While her kids were in elementary school, she started her journey toward a higher

degree. She took courses part-time at the University of Connecticut while also helping to run the family carpet business. Franny later transferred to the University of Hartford (so she could take care of her ill father) and graduated in 1975 with a joint degree in Spanish and French.

Besides her formal degree, Fran was a student all her life, curious and intellectual until her final breath. She took opera and art history classes, was passionate about classical music and was a prolific reader. Doing crossword puzzles was her sport and she could complete the NYT crossword and Double Crostic in record time even in her final years. And, let's face it, she also had panache and great style, with a face and figure that could rival any Hollywood actress – sporting pedal-pushers as well as Audrey Hepburn did, and turning heads even into her 90s!

But Franny can't be talked about without also including Eddy. They spent virtually every moment together for 74 years, catching plays in New York, traveling the world, going on weekly rides, splitting sandwiches every day and doing impersonations of characters from Mel Brooks' Blazing Saddles and Young Frankenstein. A Hartford Courant article written about Ed and Fran commemorating their 70th wedding anniversary said they "kissed at a New Year's party and that was it. It was love at first kiss."

But even after Eddy passed, Franny wouldn't be stopped, declaring every day "I want to paint the town red." And she largely did.

Fran was beloved by her "mispachah" of devoted family, friends and caretakers which include her three kids, Mitch, Bruce and Karen; spouses Arline and dearly departed Annie; her niece-daughter Donna; her nephew Ken and Patty, Anna, Ami and family; cousins including the Dubowy clan, the Dancheks, the Toubmans; lifetime best friend Rho; and a bevy of significant and steadfast friends including Harry and our gang from CT, DC and NYC. We

also want to thank, from the bottom of our hearts, Fran and Ed's devoted caretakers who have become part of our family: Sophia, Marion, Dorothy, Sharmila, Opal and Vanessa.

There will be a "shiva" on Sunday, June 9th from 1-5 pm. at the Friedman home.

Dress festively for Fran to celebrate her exuberant life.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England and the Hartford Hospital Health Care at Home Hospice

If you really want to honor Fran's memory, Vote for Biden!