

Atchison, KS



Nancy Lou Wessel, 91, of Atchison, died peacefully Tuesday evening, July 25, 2023, at her home after a short illness.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 29, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Atchison. Friends and relatives are invited to attend a visitation and luncheon immediately following the service in the church's parish hall.

Nancy was born on Sept. 16, 1931, in Atchison, the daughter of Chester J. and Frances E. Keating. She attended schools in Atchison, St. Joseph and Fayetteville, S.C. She graduated from Central High School in St. Joseph in 1947.

She met William C. Wessel, Jr., at St. Joseph Junior College, where both participated in theater. After junior college Nancy finished her studies at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa, with a bachelor's degree in Spanish.

Nancy and William C. Wessel, Jr., were married Nov. 1, 1952, at Christ Episcopal Church in St. Joseph. He preceded her in death in 2014.

Nancy was a stay-at-home mom while living in St. Joseph, devoted to her husband and four children. While living in St. Joseph, Nancy was heavily involved in community activities. She was a member and president of the St. Joseph Junior League, a founder of the Meals on Wheels program and heavily involved in the St. Joseph's Children's Community Theater.

In February of 1976, the family moved to Atchison, where she and Bill became the proprietors of Waisner and Shelver, a ladies clothing store and bridal shop at 515 Commercial St. It previously had been owned and operated by her parents and grandparents.

Upon retirement in 1993, Nancy and Bill headed south to their beloved Hope Town, Abaco Bahamas. Their little slice of paradise was a place to unwind, make new friends and enjoy family visiting from time to time. While winters were spent there, many late summer vacations took them to Estes Park, Colo.

Later in life, the travel bug bit Nancy, and she circumvented Iceland in 2018, explored Ireland and Scotland in 2019 and cruised along the the Mexican coast and Southern Caribbean in 2022.

Left to cherish her memory are her four children: Nina (Gerald) Schletzbaum, Good Intent; William C. Wessel III, Atchison; Lydia (Sam) Funk, Atchison; and Nanette Kissenberth, Warren, Vt. She is also survived by five grandchildren: Lauren (Tyson) Fitzpatrick, Atchison; Madison Wood, Burlington, Vt.; Mary-Kate (Abby) Funk, Liberty, Mo.; Garner (Ashley) Funk, Atchison; and William Christian Wessel IV, Atchison; and four great-granddaughters, Abigail, River, Ava and Brynn.

She was preceded in death by her son-in-law, George Kissenberth, Warren, Vt.

Memorial contributions are suggested to Trinity Episcopal Church, the Sisters of Mount Saint Scholastica or Amberwell Home Health and Hospice and may be left in care of Arensberg-Pruett Funeral Home in Atchison.