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Dorothee Polson



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Phoenix, Arizona



Dorothee Polson Obituary

Dorothee (Singer) Polson

Died Wednesday evening, October 22, 2014 in Phoenix, AZ.

A Celebration of her life services will be held at Sinai Mortuary, 4538 N. 16th St, Phoenix, AZ, (602-248-0030); Sunday at 10:00am.

In lieu of flowers contributions may be made in her memory to the Arizona Jewish Historical Society, [American Cancer Society](#), or Hospice of the Valley.

Dorothee is survived by Paul Elliott Polson, her loving husband of 67 years, her adored children and their spouses, Paige (Dennis Stone), Miami, FL., Dorian (James Lieberman), San Diego, and Paul Jr., "Nicki", (Sue Rosenblatt), Phoenix.; by five amazing and accomplished grandchildren: Allison and Zachary Stone, Benjamin (and wife Tasha,) and Marley Lieberman, and Alix Polson; all of whom called her Dodo.

She also leaves two aunts, Beverly Sorkin Shapiro and Sylvia Sorkin, both of Minneapolis, and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Dorothee was born in Minneapolis, MN., to Mary (Sorkin) and Charles S. Singer Sr. She was preceded in death by her parents, her grandson, Jesse Daniel Lieberman, her only sister, Marcella Singer Vitoff Malumphy, her only brother, Charles S. Singer Jr., and by Charles' son, Robert Stanley Singer.

Dorothee was a staff member of The Arizona Republic from 1962 until her early retirement in 1988. She began as Food Editor, but also was restaurant critic, columnist

and travel editor.

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She regularly used her prize-winning food sections and columns to help promote local philanthropies and fund raising events, telling their stories and adding recipes from their members.

She was best remembered for her award-winning column, "Pot au Feu", which was often about her family, and for her travel stories which highlighted the culture and customs of other countries, as well as their foods and recipes.

She also wrote "Dorothee Polson's Pot au Feu Cookbook", a compilation of her family columns plus 156 "unique" recipes. After testing all of the recipes she gained 10 pounds, and said she would never again write another cookbook.

She traveled to all 50 United States, to many several times, plus Puerto Rico, both Samoa's and the U.S. Virgin Islands; to more than 50 foreign countries, many more than once, and to every continent (except Antarctica) and most seas. She reported to her family: "It is fabulous to visit other lands, but it makes you realize and appreciate that the United States of America is the best country in the world."

She said her career fulfilled all her girlhood dreams of becoming a roving reporter. "I was able to travel, and write about it, and still have a family and home," she said.

She was a graduate of North High School, Minneapolis, and attended many NHS reunions, including the 50th and 60th (where she led her classmates in singing the class song).

For the 50th reunion, Dorothee produced and edited the "50th Reunion 'Polaris' ", for which she compiled a Time Line of the high school years, from 1941 through 1945. She included the books, songs, movies, dances, even the fashions, contrasting them with the blaring headlines and foreign datelines of those tumultuous World War II years, from the bombing of Pearl Harbor through to Victory in Europe and Victory in Japan Days and the end of the war.

In her Editor's Message she wrote of the students growing up in a period of "gentle

innocence" while "horrible wartime events were going on.

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"While we were having so much fun, 30 million people were killed in the war, plus 10 million more in Nazi death camps," she wrote. "We became the generation that gave birth to the awesome Baby Boomers. We are the survivors of so many revolutions: sexual, feminine, scientific, civil rights, health care, communication-all on-going."

She wrote that "editing this booklet brings me full circle. The circle began when I was the feature editor of both the North High Polaris Weekly and Annual.I went on to the University of Minnesota " Daily", then a 30-year career as a daily newspaper editor and columnist...and now, 50 years later, I have returned to my journalistic roots."

She was an honors graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Mass Communication, majoring in journalism, with a double minor in history and the humanities. She was elected to Theta Sigma Phi, the honorary journalism fraternity and to the honorary history fraternity. While a sophomore, she married Paul, a decorated WWII veteran, on July 1, 1947, and the young couple went on to complete their college educations together. In the 1940s it was unheard of for a married woman to be a college student, too.

After graduation and three babies later, she was a suburban writer for the Minneapolis Star Tribune, as early as the 1950s writing a series on the newly emerging "Working Mothers", typing at home after putting the children down to nap.

From 1959-1962 she was Women's Editor of the Kansas City Kansan, where she won many national journalism awards, and produced a weekly food section. Among other prize-winning series, she wrote "Women in Politics", attending state and regional conventions to document these growing roles.

The family moved to Phoenix in January, 1962, where her husband expanded his business, Paul Polson Jewelers--Watch Masters, at 120 North Central in the San Carlos Hotel and in the former downtown Hilton Hotel, and later at 3003 North Central, until his retirement in 2004.

Arriving in Phoenix, Dorothee was immediately hired at The Republic, the timing a bit of

a problem because all of her office clothes were on the moving van, which was delayed in reaching Phoenix. Within a few months, she started The Republic's weekly food section, which grew to 24, to sometimes more than 36 pages.

For her work at The Republic, Dorothee received more awards than she could count or house. She won first place awards from all of the national journalism competitions, so many times, that new rules were instituted, limiting the number of times any one person could win, to give other writers an opportunity. She was particularly proud of winning first place among 5,000 entries in the National Press Women competition.

She interviewed John F. Kennedy, Hubert H. Humphrey (twice), Barry Goldwater (twice), and countless celebrities, but focused on shining the food spotlight on local people and chefs.

She also met Harry Truman (at the Truman Library) and Dwight Eisenhower (on a Palm Springs, CA. golf course).

In almost 27 years at The Republic, Dorothee was a popular public speaker for both local and national audiences. Even after her retirement, and until her last years, she continued to accept speaking engagements on such diverse topics as The Changing Role of Women, (first written for a national convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, but updated annually for other groups), 30 Years as a Food Editor, How I Wrote the Pot au Feu Cookbook and Gained 10 Pounds, Fabulous Foods of the Future, Instant Tradition, The Traveling Food Editor, and, for industry groups only, A Food Editor in the Supermarket.

After retirement, she, her husband and their son, Paul Jr., published a slick-paper, full-color magazine, Central SKYLINE, from 1995-1999, stopping only when she had surgery for a detached retina.

She then colored her black hair blonde, and continued to delight in traveling with Paul (they especially loved Israel, China, Kenya, Egypt and the Caribbean area, where they explored almost every major island, most recently, the Dominican Republic). The couple sailed the seven seas on many cruises, including to Dubai, India, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia. Her last cruise, just this past July, 2014, with her husband,

oldest daughter and youngest Granddaughter, Alix, to the Bahamas, where Alix's swim with the dolphins was featured in the Phoenix Jewish News. ✕

In 2011 they took the Amtrak train from coast to coast, (Miami to San Diego) getting off for sightseeing in New Orleans, San Antonio and Los Angeles.

The walls of their home were covered with indigenous art they collected from all over the world, plus family heirlooms created by their children. They finally built on a gallery to obtain more wall space. She also collected silver demi-tasse spoons from foreign countries, and in later years, suns, moons, mermaids and seahorses, "enough to leave some for all the children", she said.

Dorothee was keenly interested in researching and writing a family history, an ongoing project. In 2012 she and Paul spent three weeks in Ukraine and Romania, searching for family records. She also enjoyed writing many plays and parodies for others to perform, as well as gardening, reading (and book clubs), movies (and discussion group afterwards), opera and theater, a couples' study group, mah jongg, several luncheon clubs, and a stock club she organized, believing strongly that women should learn money management including investing. She was always eager to learn new things, attempting even painting, guitar and tango lessons.

A 1980 cancer survivor, she participated in many Relays for Life, sponsored by the [American Cancer Society](#).

Her greatest joy was spending time with her family, including annual mother-daughter getaways, and planning and attending many family reunions.

Since 1994 when Alix, her only Phoenix grandchild, was born, Dodo took great pleasure in spending Fridays with the growing child. They would bake challah bread, brownies or cookies, harvest backyard citrus, play mah jongg, plan age-appropriate adventures and always conclude by preparing Sabbath dinner for the family, and celebrating the Sabbath rituals.

While her children were growing, Dorothee always told them that her family was the rich, nourishing, delicious, life-sustaining "bread" that was her life, and that her career

was just the icing on the top. But she urged her daughters, granddaughters, and other young women, to prepare for satisfying careers of their own, in addition to their roles as wives and mothers. ×

Her own mother, great-grandmother and sister were nurses; her grandmother, a tailor. "It is important for women to achieve in their chosen professions," she said. "But they should not miss out on marriage and rearing children. Raising children and family life are the hardest, but also the most rewarding and joyous parts of life," she said.

She often quoted from a prayer book, "Birth is a beginning, and death the destination, but life is a journey," and would add, "Make that journey a great one---the only time we have is now."

When each of her six grandchildren became a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, she created large, framed, time-lines for them, illustrated with photographs depicting their 13-year-journeys.

She was a member of Arizona Jewish Historical Society, Phoenix Art Museum, Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Foundation, and many social groups. She served on the board of Brandeis University National Women's Committee, facilitating several study groups for the organization, and for 20 years was on the board of the Sylvia Plotkin Judaica Museum.

She was an acclaimed hostess, creating parties that her family and friends remember fondly.

In 1997 Dorothee and Paul wrote a 50th wedding anniversary "ketubah", or traditional marriage contract, which they read aloud at a gala Tea Dance celebration, followed by a family cruise to Mexico. For their 60th anniversary in 2007, they took the family of 14 on another cruise to Alaska, after a colorful "fiesta" where the guests dressed in Mexican regalia. For their 65th wedding anniversary in 2012, they hosted an Arizona Centennial costume party, celebrating also their 50 years in Phoenix. Guests wore the fashions of 1912 and learned to dance the 1912 Turkey Trot, taught by the granddaughters. At each party, Dorothee and Paul repeated the vows they had prepared for the ketubah. They wrote, in part: "As we look back on our lives together....we have shared joy and sorrow,

happiness and adversity; wonderful times and trying times,
but always, companionship, love and laughter.

"We are deeply grateful for the blessings of life, ...especially,
for our three precious children....(and)....
we rejoice now in our children's children.

"We hope that we can continue on our journey together,
hand-in-hand, lovers and best friends forever."

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Memories and Condolences for Dorothee Polson

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