



Gael Donnelly

August 31, 1945 - February 5, 2025

Gael Donnelly passed away at the age of seventy-nine on February 5, 2025. Gael was a beloved sister and aunt to the large Donnelly clan. She is survived by her siblings, Terry (Sandy) Donnelly, Noreen Killebrew, Kathleen Jackson, Gordon (Janice) Donnelly, and many extended family members. She is predeceased by her parents, Thomas and Marie Donnelly, and siblings, Thomas, Dennis, Brian, Deirdre, Michael, and Moira.

Gael was born on August 31, 1945, in Mt. Clemens, MI. She graduated from James Monroe High School in Bronx, NY and worked in different fields from providing day care to retire as a records clerk from Iron Mountain.

After spending most of her life in California, Gael came back to Michigan to be closer to family. With siblings living in other states, there were great memories from family reunions over the years with camping on the beach in Nevada, hiking the trails in Oregon, reunions at sisters' homes in Michigan, canoeing in Lake Tahoe, and getting sunburned in Myrtle Beach.

In 2005, Gael, Tom, and Kathy went on the vacation of a lifetime to Ireland where they created memories that resonated deeply within their souls. Gael especially enjoyed the drives through the rolling green pastures, viewing the towering cliffsides, and visiting the stoic castles and historic ruins.

With honor, the torch was handed to Gael by her brother, Tom, to continue researching the Donnelly family history. She traced back many generations to various areas in Ireland and Wales where the Donnelly ancestors came from. She faithfully reached out to current family, to assemble and maintain family

history books to pass on to the next generation.

Gael had different hobbies she enjoyed. She volunteered at Meals on Wheels after retirement. She bowled in leagues at Rose Bowl Lanes with various family members for several years. She would spend hours cultivating and maintaining the gardens in her yard with her loyal companions, Elgato, Kita, Lily, Moonstar, and Bebe. She was especially proud of her rose bushes, hostas, and irises. Every visitor got the tour from the front yard all the way to the back fence. She was a proud member of the Red Hats Society, a women's organization that promotes friendship, fun, and personal growth, which encouraged Gael to live her life to the fullest and not take herself too seriously.

Spending the holidays with family was especially important to Gael. She brought joy and happiness to every function, always interested to hear about each family member's activities and accomplishments. From summer parties to holidays to birthday parties for the children, Gael would be the first one to offer help with anything that needed to be done. Connecting with family and friends was always her top priority.

Gael never had a harsh word for anyone, always helped wherever she could, and was the heart of the Donnelly family. She will truly be missed.

Tribute Wall

MS

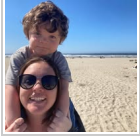
“ Gael was always my favorite Donnelly, besides her sister Moira, my wife. When Moira passed away, Gael spent a lot of time over to our house helping keep up with the gardening. She was always a hard worker, and never stopped till the work was done. I greatly appreciated her. Rest in peace, and say hello to your family, and give Moira a big hug for me.

Michael Frank Sr - February 22, 2025 at 02:25 PM

NK

“ I loved my Aunt Gael very much! She was always interested in my life and how Ed and the kids were doing. I really appreciate our Donnelly Family reunions and Aunt Gael always had a Donnelly Family history book updated and ready to hand out. Our last Donnelly Family reunion was in 2017 at Aunt Kathys house. That's the last time I say Aunt Gael and she was healthy and happy. I talked to her a few times before she passed and she said I'm ready if it's my time to go. Now she is with my mother Deirdre in heaven and lots of family looking down on us and smiling 😊 love you Aunt Gael ~RIP. Julie Anne Kope

Niece Julie Kope - February 19, 2025 at 03:02 AM



“ I only met Gael a handful of times, she is my aunt but I’ve lived in Oregon my whole life and was too young/poor to attend the reunions. Every interaction produced a story for later but my most recent interaction just a few years ago was the most important. She sat down and walked me through the full history of the Donnellys something I always wanted to do but couldn’t on my own. She shed a new light of the grandparents I never got to meet and the aunts/uncles I was unable to grow up with. She showed me the part of my world that had been dark for a long time and for that I will be forever grateful. Now I know where my dad’s love of Irish setters came from, those images will forever be with me now. My name is no longer Donnelly since I got married last year but now I know more than ever where I come from and the people I call family. Thank you Gael rest in peace.



Nora Wicklund - February 17, 2025 at 11:12 AM

KJ

“ One of my many , many memories of Gael is when my own husband passed away many years ago and I was still in a state of mourning when one evening I opened my front door and much to my surprise, delight and comfort stood Gael on my front porch. I was speechless and just broke down in her arms. She may have small in stature but had a heart as big as the Grand Canyon. She was my rock.

Kathleen L Jackson - February 15, 2025 at 12:18 PM