



Virginia "Ginnie" M. Earhart

December 8, 1934 - November 10, 2025

Virginia Margaret (Donaho) Earhart of San Diego, CA, age 90, passed away peacefully at home in San Diego on November 10, 2025.

Virginia—"Ginnie" to her friends—was born in 1934 in St. David, Illinois, the third of six children and only daughter of Melvin Clark Donaho (1903–74) and Lillie Julia (Tozier) Donaho (1910–93).

Ginnie grew up in and around Havana, IL, where she met her high school sweetheart, H. Byron Earhart. They were married in 1956, a few years after graduating from Havana HS. As Byron pursued his PhD, the young couple lived in Chicago (1956–62) and Sendai, Japan (1962–65), sparking a lifelong interest in Japanese culture. After settling in Kalamazoo, MI, Virginia resumed her own studies in 1973, receiving a Masters of Education from Western Michigan University in 1978. For 25 years, she taught kindergarten through second grade at Bangor Elementary School (Bangor, MI), where she challenged and inspired hundreds of children to do and be their best. She and Byron retired to San Diego in 1999 to be closer to their grandchildren. She devoted her retirement years to traveling, crafting, bridge, and compiling and editing the Earhart-Donaho Family Cookbook. She planned for Christmas year-round and loved bringing the whole family together to celebrate holidays. She was a member of Hope United Methodist Church of Rancho Bernardo, CA.

She is survived by her husband Byron; sons Kenneth (Florence Fong) and David (Susumu Kamimura) of San Diego, CA, and Paul (Mary Minor) of Portland, OR; grandchildren Michelle Bearheart (Jack Bearheart) and Adrienne Earhart of San Diego, and Bryce Earhart and Dylan Earhart of Portland, OR; and great grandchild Asa Bearheart of San Diego. Predeceased by brothers Melvin, Waldo, Kermit, and Timothy Donaho, she is survived by brother Terry Donaho of Decatur, IL and numerous nephews, nieces, grandnephews, and grandnieces.

Online tributes can be posted to <https://www.hurleyfh.com>. A graveside service and interment will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2025 at Laurel Hill Cemetery, Havana, Illinois.

Hurley Funeral Home in Havana is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Laurel Hill Cemetery

1105 E Laurel Ave
Havana, IL 62644
(309) 543-2986

Previous Events

Graveside Service

NOV 20. 2:00 PM (CT)

Laurel Hill Cemetery
1105 E Laurel Ave
Havana, IL 62644
(309) 543-2986

Tribute Wall

PE

“ *Happy Birthday mom!*



Paul Earhart - December 08, 2025 at 02:36 PM

BE

“ *Thank you to everyone who has taken time to write a tribute or share a memory of my wife. Your kind thoughts and well wishes are a comfort to me and my family in our time of loss and grieving.*

Byron Earhart - December 07, 2025 at 08:42 PM

LA

“ *I remember visiting the farm in Bangor, Michigan with my parents and sister. One of my favorite memories was when Virginia made delicious donuts! They were awesome! Virginia also told us where to pick blueberries on their farm. Since I was a city kid (and now a city adult), that was really special to me.
Love to all! Laurel Taylor*

laurel - November 29, 2025 at 12:58 PM

JT

“ Our friendship spans many places and many decades. It started as neighbors in the late 50's at the University of Chicago, continued through a memorable Michigan farm visit, lasted during your stay in Japan and ours in East Africa, and finally remained in New York City and San Diego.

Such fond memories I have of these times and will continue to hold dear.

With love,
Judy Taylor

judith Taylor - November 24, 2025 at 10:22 AM

CP

“ I remember fondly spending a bit of time with Virginia here in Tokyo and then in San Diego. She was full of life, stories and laughter - a real live wire. I know how much she loved and cared about Byron, her boys and their families. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

Curtis Patterson - November 21, 2025 at 07:29 PM

DF

“ Ginnie became inseparable friends when she began teaching in Bangor, Michigan. Ginnie was very insightful and supportive of students, teachers and staff. Plus her playful acts kept us all happy and chuckling. We traveled to Japan not as tourists but feeling like we were part of the Japanese culture. Most rewarding was to have Ginnie as a lifelong, loving sisterly relationship❤️



Dianna Felke - November 20, 2025 at 02:23 PM

DF

“ *Dianna Felke lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginnie" Earhart*



Dianna Felke - November 20, 2025 at 02:10 PM

MB

“ *Marilyn and John Baker lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginnie" Earhart*



Marilyn and John Baker - November 19, 2025 at 09:36 PM

DH

“ *I loved growing up across the street from Mrs. Earhart. Byron, Virginia, and the boys were delightful. I can hear my mom and Virginia laughing. My sympathies and sending blessings to you, Byron, and to the boys and your families. My mom is here in Florida with me, so we will not make it to the funeral, but we are thinking of you.*

Dawn Wolthuis nee' Hendriksen - November 19, 2025 at 07:11 PM

EB

“ *Mrs. Earhart was my first grade teacher many years ago. I have many fond memories including the Japanese tea party and staying after school to help in the classroom. I wanted to be just like her and she inspired me to become a teacher. I have been in education for 24 years and counting. Wishing her family comfort and peace during this difficult time.*

Erin B - November 19, 2025 at 06:55 PM

KE

Mrs. Earhart was my kindergarten and first grade teacher. 40 years later I still carry fond memories of her classes and an impression of being supported and challenged from a young age. She helped spark curiosity about other cultures with a Japanese tea party. I'm grateful that I crossed paths with such an amazing woman at that age in life. Sending love and peace to all her friends and family.

Keri - November 25, 2025 at 08:34 PM

DF

“ I know Byron remembers this when in Japan with Ginnie and myself and we had a big confusing laugh. We walked all over the Japanese streets to find the sleeping cat. Well, we finally found it!!!! One of the many funny memories.

Dianna Felke - November 18, 2025 at 04:49 PM

TD

“ Wishing we all could have had more time together. Have so many wonderful memories of time gone by. Sis, You always kept us entertained and treated everyone so special. Although you were far away you always were on our minds and in our hearts. On all the times we spent together, each was a new wonderful adventure. All of our family sends prayers to all your family. We are blessed to have you in our family. Loving You Always.

Terrence Donaho - November 18, 2025 at 04:26 PM

TD

“ Terrence Donaho lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginnie" Earhart



Terrence Donaho - November 18, 2025 at 04:14 PM

CK

“ So many memories of Virginia. We worked together at the telephone switchboard. Prayers to the family.

Carol Fisk Kolves - November 18, 2025 at 12:24 AM

CK

“ Lots of memories with Virginia. We worked at the telephone office switch board. There had been a storm anyway lines were somehow messed up. She had a problem getting through. She finally said operator are you Normal? I laughed and she realized what she said. She was trying to reach Normal Illinois . I was at a lot of the family gatherings since I was neighbors to the relatives. Prayers to the family.

Carol Fisk Kolves - November 17, 2025 at 04:51 PM

“ Oh Ginnie, do you remember how we snuggled under the featherbed; two teenage girls, giggling and talking until your dad, in the bedroom below, yelled for us to go to sleep or he'd come up? And after your mom skimmed the cream off the milk, how we girls churned the butter; and oh my, all the strawberries we had to clean. The boys picked them; we washed them and then your mom prepared them for freezing.

What about the time your dad took us and 3 of the boys over where he's planted rows and rows of vegetables, gave each of us a hoe and we all had to weed one row - a long, long row (the distance between two telephone poles long). But your mom came to our rescue and told your dad that since the boys didn't have to do housework, we girls shouldn't have to hoe any garden.

We roller-skated on the sidewalk over by the Lightle's. How many games of jacks did we play? And pick-up-sticks? And croquet over in the church yard?

What about the school musical we both "starred" in? After I simply sang, "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outta My Hair", you wowed the audience with your rendition of "I'm Just a Girl Who Can't Say No." I can still see your facial gestures as you sang, "When a feller tries to kiss a girl, I know she auta give his face a slap, but whenever someone kisses me, I somehow, sorta, wanna kiss him back." You could always make people laugh.

We rode the school bus from Bryant to Canton for High School, singing all the way. That was the main reason your folks wanted me to live with them; you were the only girl that would be riding the bus for your freshman year, and your mom didn't want you to be alone; she loved you so much and was oh so protective of you. Of course, I, too, was beginning high school and was so happy to be a part of your family."

Do you remember when we visited you, Byron and your boys in

Chicago, in Michigan and in Nashville when Byron was at Vanderbilt? I remember, too, when you, Byron, and your boys came to our home for Christmas. I have, somewhere, a snapshot of Byron sitting on the floor playing with the kids. I saw it some time ago; wish I knew where it is now.

I treasure the family cookbook you gave me. What a tremendous undertaking; you were smart, you gathered, you organized, you compiled, you copied and you succeeded! That, itself, is a tribute to all you are and your fantastic abilities.

Well, I could go on and on, but this tribute wall is not large enough. I want to tell you and should have, year and years and years ago; I'm so fortunate to have had you as my sister and though we haven't been physically close for so many years, you've always been in my heart and that's where you'll always remain. I love you, Ginnie.

*Your Sis,
Eileen*

Eileen Bieneman - November 17, 2025 at 04:30 PM

BE

“ *I would like to light a candle for mom and all the pleasant memories we have of her.*



Byron Earhart - November 14, 2025 at 06:41 PM

AB

“ *I light a candle for a favorite aunt who i have such fond memories of. May she rest in peace.....*

Annette Brown - November 14, 2025 at 12:09 PM

LH

“ *Larry and Mary Hundt sent a virtual gift in memory of Virginia "Ginnie" Earhart*



Larry and Mary Hundt - November 14, 2025 at 08:02 AM

DE

“ *David Earhart lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginnie" Earhart*



David Earhart - November 14, 2025 at 02:24 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Virginia "Ginnie" M. Earhart.*



November 13, 2025 at 02:59 PM

PE

“ So many great memories but my best memories of mom are from celebrations which she always made special.



At Christmas we had Santa's helper boxes, so we had something to open before traveling to relatives to celebrate the holiday.

For Birthday sleepovers, she would host a hand made donut bar with frosting and sprinkles.

Mom, you are special and I celebrate you and all the love you gave to me and all the love you gifted this world.

Rest in peace

Paul Earhart - November 13, 2025 at 02:17 PM