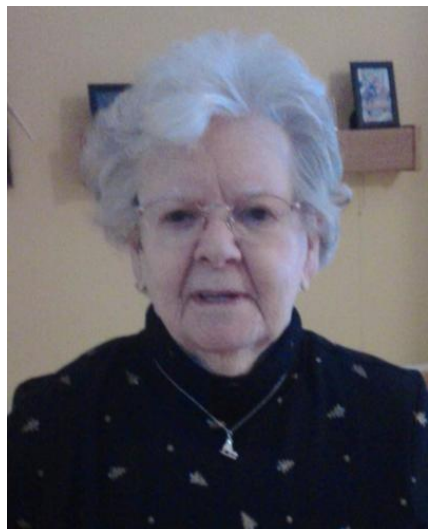


## LORRAINE KITSON – January 30, 2023



Lorraine Zella (Cormier) Kitson, wife, mother, grandmother, entertainer, and world traveler, passed from this life to eternity on Monday, January 30, 2023, at the age of 94. Her later years were spent at her home on Colburn Avenue in Gardner, Applewood Home for Elders and, finally, Gardner Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, where she went home to be with the Lord.

Alfred and Mary (Duguay) Cormier, Canadian immigrants, welcomed their firstborn, Lorraine, on February 14, 1928, in Gardner, MA. Followed a year later by Roger "Bijou" and then Leo "Sonny Boy." She attended Gardner High School uneventfully until the arrival of her much-loved youngest brother Leo Cormier. Family history says she enjoyed her role

as the doting older sister much more than schoolwork. She also found time to refine her ice-skating skills, building upon pond and rink opportunities from the age of 3.

At the age of 22, she competed in the Silver Skates Derby. The prize was a contract with the **Ice Capades**. **She loved skating as an "Ice Capet."** **Within the year, she met her future husband, Maxwell Kitson, of the acrobatic act "The Maxwells."** They married in Gardner, then traveled on the Queen Mary to England for an extended honeymoon. Their first daughter, Jacqueline Ann, was born in October 1953 in Hove, England. They continued entertaining and traveling, arriving in Croydon, Australia, two years later, where their second daughter, Marie Elizabeth, was born. They returned to the states in 1960 and settled in Brigantine, New Jersey. Family life was adventurous and varied, traveling to England, Australia, and New Zealand, occasionally returning to Brigantine. Once the girls finished school and married, Max and Lorraine moved to Norfolk Island in the South Pacific.

After a few years, Lorraine decided she wanted to come home. Lorraine and Max parted amicably, Max eventually moving back to Australia, and Lorraine came back to Gardner to take care of her aging family, including her mom and oldest brother, Roger, and her lively pet Yorkie, Tootsie. For her entertainment, she continued ice skating and took up ballroom dancing and cross-country skiing. She was always active, visiting with her daughters and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Overall, her options to settle, she chose to stay in Gardner for her later years. Nothing made her happier than knowing she was waking up to another familiar day in Gardner.

Lorraine is preceded in death by her ex-husband, Max Kitson; a brother, Roger Cormier; a daughter, Jacqueline (Jacqui) Thompson; and a grandson, Paul Maxwell Merlino. Lorraine is survived by a brother, Leo Cormier of Arizona; daughter, Marie Merlino Kiessling and her husband Gene of Pennsylvania; a grandson, Andrew Merlino and his wife Alicia; three

great-grandsons A.J., Henry, and James of New Orleans, LA. Funeral Services will be held Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in Annunciation Parish at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church, 135 Nichols Street, Gardner, MA. Burial will follow at Notre Dame Cemetery, West Street, Gardner, MA.