



## Jean Donahue Keef

January 3, 1925 - September 24, 2020

WINDHAM-- Jean Donahue Keef, 95, travelled on to her eternal home on September 24th after a brief illness. She was born in Veazie, Maine January 3, 1925 to Helen Berdeen Donahue and Ross Walton Donahue. Her dad was a U.S. Customs Agent on the Canadian Border. The family lived in many border towns including Vanceboro, Maine where she met her beloved husband, George Arthur Keef. They married while Jean was attending the University of Maine and subsequently moved to North Carolina where George finished his tour of duty with the Marine Corps during WWII. They moved back to Maine and eventually settled in Windham where they remained the rest of their lives. The couple had six children, Martha Strout (Ronald) Windham, Karen Lothrop (Thomas) Longwood FL, Dan Keef (deceased) (Debora Tancred, Casco), Edward Keef (Sherron Sawyer) Daytona Beach, FL, William Keef, Thorndike, ME, David Keef (Jennifer Wallace), South Portland. The couple also considered Inger Johanne Myrstad Riley of Thiensville WI a surrogate daughter. She had been an AFS student from Norway who lived with the family in 1963-64. The family continued to be close and Jean and George and other family members took several trips to Norway for special occasions. The couple had 13 grandchildren and 24 great grandchildren who loved their "GG", especially since she always took time to talk with them and learn about their interests and activities. In her younger years Jean was involved in many community activities including Land of Lakes Garden Club, Ladies Auxiliary, AFS and was an active member of the North Windham Union Church, where she sang in the choir. She also visited area assisted living facilities for several years with a group of women who sang "old time" songs to the residents. She enjoyed painting, reading, and was a talented writer. Her letters always exuded warmth and were very much enjoyed by family members before modern communication platforms came into being. Until recently she wrote in her diary every day. Jean was a master at Scrabble and enjoyed Cribbage and other card games. She was a "cat whisperer" and enjoyed their Siamese cat, "Sham-poo", as well as her "grand cats". When the couple first moved to Windham, they owned a poultry farm where Jean dressed two freshly killed chickens for every Sunday dinner. In the 60s the Keefs were active partners in the Sebago Basin Tenting Area (now the site of WalMart,) where she worked in the office. Jean attained a certificate in accounting and was the bookkeeper for their

business founded in the 70s, the original Frost and Flame (named by her) on Route 115, a store that sold bikes, cross country skis, and airtight woodstoves.

During the 60's the Keefs built a cabin on Eustis Ridge which has served as a hunting and fishing getaway for the family. Jean loved fly fishing for trout with their son, David. They enjoyed many summers and a few winter trips to cross country ski with various friends and family members.

After George's retirement they wintered in New Smyrna Beach, Florida where they shared a home with Jean's brother, Bob Donahue, and his wife, Oral. They all enjoyed shuffleboard, Cribbage tournaments and walking the beach.

In George's 80th year the couple took a cruise to Alaska with their two daughters and spouses and another trip to Scotland, England, Netherlands, Belgium, and France; trips that produced many happy memories.

They enjoyed a harmonious 67-year marriage punctuated with love, laughter, and big family gatherings. After George passed on in 2011, Jean stayed in Florida with Karen in the winter and in Maine with her "3 daughters" help the rest of the year. She faced widowhood with bravery and strength and continued to enjoy cards, audio books, endless Scrabble games, and visits from family members.

Jean lived life with an abundance of faith and a great sense of humor. Everyone who knew Jean described her as sweet, loving, and compassionate. She was a "mother figure" to everyone who knew her. She will be greatly missed by all.

An online virtual service in Jean's honor will be held at a date and time to be announced. For updated information or to express condolences, please visit [www.DolbyBlaisSegee.com](http://www.DolbyBlaisSegee.com). A celebration of her life will also be held sometime in Summer of 2021. Donations in her name can be made to a favorite charity. Arrangements are in the care of the Windham Chapel of Dolby Blais & Segee, 434 River Rd., Windham, ME 04062.

# Comments

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“ I'm very sorry to hear of Jeans passing. Her, and George were such wonderful people. Always smiling, happy to see, and talk to myself, and my kids. Maybe gone, but will never be forgotten!!

**Joey Neault** - October 05, 2020 at 06:33 AM

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“ I am so sorry to learn of Jean's passing. She was a very special and wonderful lady and I am fortunate to have known her. All of my life and even now, 11 Sandbar rd. was the only place I have ever lived that felt like home. She and George had such a beautiful yard and flowers everywhere. I would come home to find beautiful peony bouquets on my table because she knew how much I loved them. My cats Eddie and Gracie had a wonderful life there as well and they enjoyed Jean just as much as she enjoyed them. Even when Eddie somehow got up high in a tree and was too fat and afraid to come down on his own, she had David come and rescue him. I have so many good memories, she will never be forgotten. Sending lots of love to the family during this time.

**Jeannie Whitney** - September 29, 2020 at 01:54 PM



“ Thanks so much for that sweet tribute She always talked about what good neighbors you and your mom were! She said your mom was the neatest housekeeper she had ever met! And she loved having your kitties there next door!

**karen lothrop Daughter of Jean Keef** - October 15, 2020 at 06:59 PM

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“ What a wonderful life she lived. I remember her as a kind and gentle lady whose focus was her family. Her home was always welcoming to us as we were friends of the Keef kids back in the 50's. She helped me collect items for a small pirates' chest that I wanted to bury for Danny to discover. His expression and animation when he unearthed it remains with me today. Jean was in on it! From collecting eggs from the hen house to jumping in piles of autumn leaves to cruising the Sandbar road on our bikes, Jean was always there to support us. I think that she was a second mom to every child she came to know. We are forever grateful for her love of cats as she rescued Finnigan from route 302 and found the best home a cat could have with Jeannie. May your wonderful memories replace the loss that you are feeling today. Rest In Peace Jean, you are one in a million.

**Genie Philpot** - September 28, 2020 at 02:32 PM

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“ I fondly remember many games of “Oh Hell”.

**David Donahue** - September 27, 2020 at 04:20 PM

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“ So sorry to see your loss ! What a wonderful Lady ! Paul C & Cheryl Jensen

**Paul C Jensen** - September 27, 2020 at 08:41 AM



“ Aunt Jean was like a second mother to me while growing up. I loved visiting the farm. She was a sweet lady and is fondly remembered.

**Neal Donahue** - September 28, 2020 at 08:58 AM