

Olive Esmay Reneau

(June 28, 1922 - October 11, 2019)



Olive Esmay, the second child of Roland Nathaniel Westby and Elizabeth Mariah Westby, nee Fuller, was born June 28, 1922 in Belize City, British Honduras (now Belize). Olive attended St John's Primary School and completed her secondary education at St Hilda's College. Major challenges affected her young life and molded her into the steadfast and resolute rock of a woman that we've all come to know. She miraculously survived the devastating September 10, 1931 Hurricane in which her newborn baby sister Norman Marjory, perished. By the age of 14, both her parents had died, leaving Olive and her six siblings to the care of their aunts, Mrs. Edith Westby Arthurs and Mrs. Ethel Fuller Wade.

In 1941, she joined Robert William Reneau, the son of Benjamin and Lilian Reneau in Holy Matrimony, a truly eventful and fruitful endeavor. Olive bore nine children: Barbara, Robert Jr., Frank, Jeanette, Norman, Cynthia, Carolyn, Gerald, and Richard. Her family was always her main focus, her very life, which she tended with all the dedication and fortitude inherited from her father. She saw to their proper education, the lessons of life, and their Christian faith and practice as the center and guide through that life.

The life of "Miss Olive" beyond the home was socially and career fulfilling. As a member of the British Red Cross Society from c. 1950, she was certified in Maternal and Child (Medical) Welfare, First Aid, Home Nursing Examinations and was registered on the Instructor's Panel of the BRCS in 1959. Cadet Troop Leader Olive Reneau established a reputation as a very strict, ramrod-straight officer among her young charges who speak of her with admiration to this day. Her Red Cross experience served her well in her nursing career in the U.S., especially the many years she worked at the Miami Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged. That dedication and enthusiasm carried over into her social and political activities in Belize and later in New York and Miami, as evidenced by her work in the Belize Association of Florida (BAF).

We will no doubt hold dear the little joys, small things like brushing her hair for a nickel, or a piece of Cadbury Chocolate as bribe to run errand or the infamous 'whippings' with the Chinese cloth slippers from Augusto Quan. Ouch! And that patented foot-stomp to drive home a point, "Hurricane Olive is about to hit".

Olive's path to Heaven was fore trod by her parents and her siblings Henry, Roland Bersford, Norman, Wellington, Gwendolyn and Roland Nathaniel. Also, her sons Richard and Frank; her grandchildren Michael, Michelle and Daniel; and her husband Robert Sr.