

Annie Aghavni “Aggie” Ghoogasian (née Kasabian) passed away peacefully in her sleep in her home at the age of 80 on August 2, 2020.

She was born to Hovanes and Mariam (Aznaurian) Kasabian on the shores of the Black Sea in Novorossiysk, Russia (USSR) on October 6, 1939, two years before the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. Her brother Hovnan “Harry” was born there in 1941. Along with thousands of Armenians from the region, she and her family were relocated by the retreating Nazi troops to Stuttgart, Germany in 1944. She spent her formative years there in a displaced persons camp, where despite the circumstances she made lifelong friends. During this time in Germany, her brothers Grikor “Greg” and Kirakos “Gary” were born.

Despite the fact that she faced many challenges in her childhood prior to coming to America - contracting polio and becoming temporarily blind - she recalled her years in Germany as among the happiest in her life. She retained her ties with her closest friends.

After the war, in 1949, she and her family were able to, with the help of George Mardikian and the American National Committee to Aid Homeless Armenians (ANCHA), relocate briefly to Fresno before settling in Los Angeles. Her sister, Seda was born in Los Angeles.

Aggie attended Stevenson Junior High School in East Los Angeles and continued her secondary education at James A. Garfield High School, during which time she worked to help with her family’s finances. Upon graduating, she attended East LA College and took up a job as a bank teller, where she thwarted a robbery after refusing to hand over any money. She was late returning home that day after she landed a spot on the local news.

In 1964, she met Richard Ghoogasian of Detroit, Michigan at a “Happy” Harry Hadigian dance/*barahantes*. They married soon thereafter and welcomed their first and only child, David, in 1965.

Aggie and Richard enrolled David at Armenian Mesrobian School four years after it opened its doors. Even during times of financial strain – such as when Richard found himself hospitalized after a severe motorcycle accident – she insisted David remain at Mesrobian. He went on to graduate from the school in 1982. He is currently serving in his second stint as principal. All three of Aggie’s grandchildren were also Mesrobian lifers, each attending the school for fifteen years from preschool through 12th grade.

Aggie worked hard her entire life, most of which was spent as a Credit Manager in the garment and office supply industries.

Throughout her life, Aggie was a staple of her local Armenian community, and remained for many decades a devoted servant of both Holy Cross Armenian Church and Mesrobian. Before she was married and knew how to drive, she would take several buses to get to the old Holy Cross Church in Downtown Los Angeles and volunteer with clerical work. She also sang in the church choir. She served in executive positions in the Ladies Aid for many years and

volunteered regularly at bingo to help raise money for the church and the school. This continued until health issues made it impossible to continue. In 1997 Holy Cross Cathedral named her Mother of the Year.

While her son was a student, she was a member of the Mesrobian Parent-Faculty Club Executive, often in the role of treasurer. She kept meticulous records and worked diligently to support the school.

Her loyalty to her community was perhaps rivaled only by her support for the Los Angeles Lakers. She never grew tired of watching their games, even during their worst seasons. In one of her final conversations during her last days, she recalled Kobe Bryant and Magic Johnson, her two favorite players. Less than 24 hours after her passing, the Lakers clinched the top spot in the Western Conference for the first time in a decade.

Aggie was extremely devoted to her family as well, always ready and willing to lend a hand when a family member was in need. Her grandchildren were the loves of her life. She was predeceased by her husband Richard in 2014.

Aggie was laid to rest on Monday, August 24, 2020 at Rose Hills Cemetery in Whittier, California.

She is survived by her:

Son and his family - David and Nairy Ghoogasian and their children Aram, Lara, and Anush

Brother - Harry and Annette Kasabian

Brother - Gary and Norma Kasabian and their children: Sylvia Sanders and family and John and Jennifer Kasabian and family

Sister - Seda Tervandian and daughter Michelle

Mother-in-law - Rose Ghoogasian

Aznaurian (Russia), Mosikian, Nashunian, Siranosian, Bagdasarian, Konoian, Kurugian, Magdesian, Minasian, Dilanian, Sarian, Ghoogasian, Sarkisian, Vartoogian, Pylman, Shrikian, Chalian, Gabriel, Mkhitarian, Matevosian, Parnagian families, and hundreds of family and friends whose lives she touched.