



Lavina L. "Vina" Mody

August 22, 1925 - August 30, 2021

Lavina L. Mody was born on August 22, 1925 to William George & Marie (Weinerth) Colgan in Sutton, Nebraska. She passed away on August 30, 2021 at Mumbai, India at the age of 96 years and 8 days. She was one of two children born in the family.

Vina, as she was affectionately known, and her family started out on a farm west of Grafton. After 5 years, Vina's parents decided to move the family to Greeley County, Nebraska where they continued farming. While in Greeley County, Vina attended Country School District 9, and after the 8th grade she began high school at the Catholic High School at O'Connor, Nebraska. On February 16, 1939, the family once again pulled up stakes, had a farm sale, and made the move to Salt Lake City, Utah, where Vina's mother had siblings living. It was a sad day for Vina's parents, but Vina was excited because she got her first 'store bought' dress when they made the move. The family spent a couple years in Salt Lake City, before moving to the Bay Area in California. Vina enrolled at St. Elizabeth's High School in Oakland, California and graduated with the class of 1942 at age 16.

After graduation, Vina was determined to become an engineer, but with the war raging on, her father persuaded her to take a 6-week drafting course instead. She soon took a job as a draftsman at the shipyards in Richmond, California, remaining in this position until 1945, before enrolling in the

University of California School of Architecture at Berkeley. Her relationship with the architects in the shipyards changed her mind about becoming an engineer, and the money she earned in the shipyards paid for her entire college education. While at Berkeley, she met a fellow architect student from India, Pilo Mody, and a relationship ensued.

After graduating from college in 1950, Vina worked at Bechtel & Co. before making the move to India in 1952. On January 3, 1953, Pilo and Vina were married in India. Together, they opened an architectural office in Bombay, practicing successfully together until Pilo's passing in 1983. In 1962, Vina's strong appreciation of Indian arts & crafts led her to open a shop promoting and marketing these items, and Contemporary Arts & Crafts began. Vina was a visionary and worked hard to promote her business and the export of traditional Indian arts & crafts, and the business is still flourishing with Vina's niece in charge of operations.

After Vina's parents retired, they left the west coast and returned to Nebraska, settling in Geneva. After Pilo passed in 1983, Vina spent a few more years in India, before making the decision to move closer to family. She purchased a beautiful Queen Ann Style Home in Geneva, opening her doors for many to share in the rich beauty and history of the home. Vina immersed herself in the community of Geneva and was quite active in the Geneva Arts Council, participating in the Parade Of Homes for many years and supporting various other events put on by the Arts Council. Vina also loved to decorate for Christmas, displaying as many as 100 Christmas trees during the holiday. She also collected teddy bears to give to needy children and she was an advocate for American Indian affairs helping to support an Indian School in South Dakota. Not having children of her own, Vina focused many efforts on supporting underserved children.

Vina was a life-long practicing Catholic, and she maintained membership with

St. Helena Catholic Church in Grafton, Nebraska.

Vina was preceded in death by her parents William & Marie; husband Pilo; and brother William and wife Helen Colgan.

Vina is survived by her nephews Sean & wife Louise Colgan of Newark, California and Evan Colgan of Montvale, New Jersey; great nephew and nieces William, Annie, and Laura; nephew Jimmy & wife Feroza Mody; and great nephew and niece Cyrus and Karene.

A Funeral Mass for Vina was held on Thursday, September 16, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Helena Catholic Church in Grafton, Nebraska. A Rosary preceded the Mass at 10:00 a.m. Fathers Michael Zimmer and Harlan Waskowiak presided over the Funeral Mass.

Deb Hoarty accompanied the congregation in the singing of "Be Not Afraid," "One Bread, One Body," and "How Great Thou Art." Ashten Smith provided special music during communion with the singing of "Ave Maria."

Pallbearers for the Service included Alex Shaner, Kipp Shaner, Jeff Johnson, Alan Slepicka, Dick Hoarty, and Bob Fessler. Honorary pallbearers included Evan Colgan, Sean Colgan, Louise Colgan, Jimmy Mody, Feroza Mody, and Bill Turek.

Interment was in the St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery in Geneva.

Farmer & Son Funeral Home was in care of the arrangements and online condolences can be left www.farmerandsonfuneralhome.com

Memorials are suggested to the Geneva Arts Council or the Geneva Rescue Squad.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery

Geneva, NE 68361

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP **15**. 1:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Farmer & Son Funeral Home
242 N 10th Street
Geneva, NE 68361
(402) 759-3617
<https://farmerandsonfuneralhome.com>

Rosary

SEP **16**. 10:00 AM (CT)

St. Helena Catholic Church
172 Jackson Avenue
Grafton, NE 68365

Funeral Mass

SEP **16**. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Helena Catholic Church
172 Jackson Avenue
Grafton, NE 68365

Graveside

SEP **16** (CT)

St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery
Geneva, NE 68361

Tribute Wall

SS

“ Hi Vina, I might be late but i just wanted you to know that, you were one of the best person i knew, you were hard working resilient and beautiful. You taught me so many things and always loved me so much. i remember the times how we used to cut the cake as we shared the same birth date aug 22nd, you always made sure that you get me something for my birthday even when you were back in the states. I really admired you for the kind of person you were. god bless you soul Vina.....

Shabana Shaikh - October 15, 2025 at 06:00 PM

DA

“ Oh, Vina! I met you only once shortly after you made contact in 2012 looking for information about Wilhelm Rock, the brother of your great-grandfather, Johann Rock. I was able to fill you in but was absolutely dumbfounded by the information you shared back. Thanks to you I was able to learn about the German origins of the Rock family and learned for the first time that Wilhelm had 11 siblings, including your g-grandfather. So we were third cousins. You unlocked a big hole in my genealogy and I will be forever grateful. I enjoyed meeting you in Roberts, IL when you drove up from Nebraska to visit Wilhelm's grave.

david - February 07, 2022 at 12:04 PM

GS

“ *It is with great sadness that I learned about Vina’s passing.*

Please accept my and my German family’s deepest Sympathy for the loss of your Beloved.

We will greatly miss her. She was the chain link between the American and the German branch of the Weinerth family. Vina set out with curiosity and passion to discover her grandfathers roots (he used to be my great-grand-uncle). It was in the 1970s and early 1980s that she and Piloö visited my family in William Weinerth’s home town Woerth/Main, near Frankfurt. And they stayed in connection ever since.

After writing and phoning with Vina on behalf of my parents for almost 15 years I had the privilege and pleasure meeting her in person at aunt Margareth’s (Weinerth Hull) 100th birthday in 2000.

We both had the feeling of knowing each other forever!

When Vina wrote the “Weinerth and Rock family history” in 2011/12 I was researching the life and social/political circumstances of my great- great-grandmother Cäcilia Weinert (Vina’s great-grandmother). I was happy to provide Vina with new found information about her German roots and to get at the same time her input about William Weinerth’s early years in the USA.

I very much treasured the time of our collaboration!

Vina cared deeply about her German cousins and always asked about everybody in particular. My family appreciated her and Piloö very much.

My younger brother, Dieter Zipprich, remembers Vina and Piloö’s first visit. He accompanied our parents to Frankfurt Airport to pick them up and they asked to be driven through down town Frankfurt. My 10 year old brother was blown away when Vina and Piloö looked at the high rises mentioning the names of the architects who designed them! Dieter remembers thinking: “This people come from faraway India - how can they possibly know anything about

skyscrapers in Frankfurt?!" Well, he soon knew better!

He still admires Vina and Piloo for their architectural genius and their genuineness and warmth towards him.

We are very grateful for the privilege to have known Vina. She will always have a special place in our hearts.

May you Rest In Peace, my dear-

With love,

"Gaby" Zipprich Seyfried and family (residing in Nelson BC, Canada)

Dieter Zipprich and his wife Ulrike in Bamberg, Germany

German Cousins

Gaby Seyfried - December 19, 2021 at 05:53 PM



“ 18 files added to the album Flower pictures



Farmer & Son Funeral Home - September 16, 2021 at 02:12 PM

LS

“ 5 files added to the album Memories Album



Lon Slepicka - September 16, 2021 at 11:38 AM

MR

“ Just so so sad that Vina has passed away - a life so well lived. SHE ARRIVED WITH ABAAN THE NIGHT BEFORE MY SON'S CHRISTENING. HOW IRONIC THAT HER FUNERAL IS TODAY - ON HIS 28TH BIRTHDAY!!!

I WOULD NOT KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN TO WRITE MY MEMORIES OF VINA.

SHE VISITED US MANY TIMES HERE IN IRELAND MANY TIMES SINCE 1993 - WE HOSTED HER 90TH BIRTHDAY PARTY HERE ON HER LAST VISIT AND I HAD PLANS TO GO TO NEBRASKA LAST SUMMER - WE ALWAYS BONDED SO WELL. SHE WAS DETERMINED TO FIND THAT LAST PIECE OF THE COLGAN FAMILY JIGSAW - DID SHE SUCCEED?

A Lady to her fingertips, always so unassuming and what stories she had to tell of her adventures across the globe.

REST EASY VINA

*May the road rise to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
And until we meet again
May God keep you in the palm of his hand*

Margaret Colgan Ryan

MARGARET RYAN - September 16, 2021 at 11:38 AM

EH

I was thinking about Vina the other day and went on line. I was stunned to find that her funeral had been the week before. We live in Nebraska about a little over two hours from Geneva and my husband and I would have tried to attend. We met Vina when she was doing research on the Colgan family. My grandfather and Margaret Colgan Ryan's grandfather were brothers and it was through Vina that we met. You can still come to Nebraska, Margaret but it won't be the same without Vina. Elaine Colgan Halferty

Elaine Colgan Halferty - September 26, 2021 at 05:30 PM

SM

“ Sumangali and Nitai Mehta purchased the Rose Remembrance for the family of Lavina L. "Vina" Mody.



Sumangali and Nitai Mehta - September 16, 2021 at 09:15 AM

NS

“ Nimai, Elisabetta, & Srikanta purchased the Lavender Reflections Spray for the family of Lavina L. "Vina" Mody.



Nimai, Elisabetta, & Srikanta - September 15, 2021 at 10:30 PM

SR

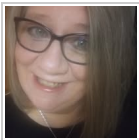
“ My deepest sympathy, Vina was a very smart, simple, caring, very interesting lady. I kept hoping to see her in Geneva again over the last few years..... I have great memories 💔

Sarah Reinsch - September 14, 2021 at 08:17 AM

AB

“ How does one fit in lifetime of memories in one small paragraph. One of the most industrious ladies I have met in my life time, Mrs. Mody (Vina) was my boss at Mody and Colgan, when I was 18 years old. Now I am 81. After I came to the U.S.A. both Piloo and Vina visited me and we had Parsi food for lunch at home. Piloo's secretary Amy is also a lifelong friend. After Piloo's passing, Vina moved to the U.S.A. and we became close friends. In the 90s I drove her around Europe mainly visiting churches which Piloo and she had visited before. I was her driver, did her airline bookings, helped her with her family Bible (genealogy project) etc. because she always thought I was still her secretary and I loved it all. Once we visited her before Christmas holidays. Ahmad (my husband) and Bill (Vina's neighbor and weekly companion at Scrabble) helped with the 100 Christmas trees, one of which was uniquely upside down for her Holiday Open House. She visited our homes many times and we were always happy to host her. Since she left for India last time I have missed her practically every day. I feel so blessed to have known her and spend so much of my life with her. Rest in peace, my dear Vina. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to her family members. Abaan and Ahmad

Abaan - September 12, 2021 at 08:02 PM



“ Janine Uldrich lit a candle in memory of Lavina L. "Vina" Mody



Janine Uldrich - September 11, 2021 at 08:06 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Lavina L. "Vina" Mody.



September 11, 2021 at 07:57 PM



“ I met Vina about 7 or 8 years ago when she was working on her book about the Colgan family. She was looking for information about the ones I was related to. She came to Illinois and I was able to meet her in person. She was a delightful lady and so interesting. It was such a pleasure to be in her company.

God bless you and welcome you into heaven the say you welcomed so many into your life. I will miss you.

Rita Campbell Gholson

Rita Campbell Gholson - September 11, 2021 at 06:38 PM



“ Vina was the architect for our San Diego home when she was only 24 years old! We are so sorry to see that she has passed; We would have loved to talk to her about her distinguished career. Our deepest condolences go out to her family.

We are working to preserve part of her legacy by getting our home historically designated. During our research, we found some fun pictures of Vina during her early years!



Michael Marks - September 08, 2021 at 02:09 PM

JB

“ *Vina is a distant cousin who I did not get to know until perhaps 6 years ago, when she searched us out to get information to include in her wonderful Colgan Family Bible, an enormous tome and genealogical treasure. Her mad dashes from Geneva, Nebraska back to Wyoming, Illinois and other central Illinois communities looking for obituaries in archives of old newspapers in libraries were legendary. She had tremendous energy and love of life. God Bless you Vina, and may you be resting in peace with Pilo. We will miss her.*

John Butte - September 08, 2021 at 09:07 AM

BW

“ *“Vina”. Her gathering were always epic. Never a stranger to her. What a wonderful host, she was, always. So welcoming and friendly. She will be missed. Bob & Beth*

Bob Webb - September 02, 2021 at 08:13 AM