



Rickie Einstein Paley

December 30, 2024

Rickie Einstein Paley, 91, formerly of New York and San Juan, Puerto Rico died peacefully at home on December 30, 2024.

Toale Brothers Funeral Home in concert with Temple Emanu-El, will be in charge of all arrangements. A graveside service will be held at Temple Beth Sholom Cemetery, Sarasota at 2 pm on Thursday, January 2, 2025

She is survived by her loving daughter, Jana Susan Paley of Sarasota, FL, a host of devoted friends, and her steadfast staff at All Star Management.

Born in the depths of the Great Depression, Rickie learned the value of a hard day's work from the moment she could reach the shelves and the cash register at her parents' juvenile furniture, toy, and bike store in New York. Over the decades since the store closed in the 1970s, Rickie would meet people randomly, exchange family stories, and she would learn that their first bike or childhood bed was purchased at the store.

An excellent student, Rickie did not have the financial means to attend college, but she prided herself on being a self taught graduate of what she called "Street University." She began her successful business career in the retail fashion sector by boldly leaving New York City and taking a job as a trainee in the retail fashion sector at Frederick & Nelson, part of Marshall Field

& Company, in Seattle, Washington. Rickie quickly rose in the ranks at the store and was well known for decking out a train car with luxury goods and sending it to Alaska in order to bring the Frederick & Nelson experience to those creating commerce on America's last frontier.

In the late 1950s, Rickie found a new opportunity at the intersection of fashion and the toy industry when Ruth Handler, the co-founder of Mattel, asked her to join the company to market a new kind of girl's toy, the Barbie Doll. Rickie leapt at the chance and became Mattel's first marketer of the new doll which was not an initial success. She realized to make Barbie a financial hit, you only had to sell the doll once, but you needed to create a wardrobe and accessories which would be continually updated and changed. Rickie's work with Mattel led Barbie to iconic status.

When Rickie met Sid Paley, the love of her life at a Borscht Belt Hotel on July 4th Weekend 1960, it was as if they were simultaneously struck by the same lightning bolt. Sid, a confirmed bachelor and real estate developer, whisked her off in a whirlwind and told her that if she could sell dollhouses, she could certainly sell real homes. One of Rickie's proudest accomplishments was selling 372 starter homes in a neighborhood Sid was developing in Puerto Rico. Rickie and Sid were partners in every way.

Along the route of her nine-decade life, Rickie became a beacon of fashion. She loved beautiful clothes and wore them well. The current President of Saks Fifth Avenue once noted that when Rickie shopped in the couture floor of the flagship store or even hunted through the accessories department, sales zoomed as other women wanted to emulate her style.

After Sid's untimely death 42 years ago, Rickie, always a dedicated mother to Jana, also became her young daughter's father and mentor while brilliantly shepherding the family business. Even on the day Sid died, she committed to

completing a warehouse project her husband had just started. Pauline Einstein, Rickie's beloved mother, joined the business and when Jana was old enough to participate, they became known as "Sid's Girls."

Though running her business was her priority, Rickie always knew the importance of community and provided leadership in Sarasota's burgeoning Jewish life. Way back in 1973, Rickie and several of her dearest friends at Temple Beth Sholom banded together to bring the Israeli Folk Festival to Sarasota's Van Wezel Hall. To her surprise and delight, they sold out every seat. Generous, yet humble, many of her philanthropic endeavors were done under the name of "Sid's Girls" including a gift to Sarasota Memorial Hospital's new Cancer Center.

Over the last forty years, Rickie developed retail centers, warehouse complexes, and workforce multi-family housing. Always entrepreneurial in spirit, Rickie provided seed capital to several startups, some of which became nationally known. During her career, she enjoyed mentoring many young people, especially young women, and imparted the need for tenacity and excellence.

With all of her accomplishments, Rickie never forgot where she came from or her down to earth values. She was equally comfortable shopping at Chanel or eating at Denny's. She will be remembered for her wit, elegance, her sharp mind, and fierce devotion to family, friends, and community. Ricki was the quintessential American women bridging two centuries, the 20th and 21st.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to The Trustees of Phillips Academy for The Sidney & Rickie Paley Memorial Fund for the Jewish Student Union, Phillips Academy, 180 Main Street, Andover, MA 01810.

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JAN 2. 2:00 PM (ET)

Temple Beth Sholom Cemetery
801 Circus Blvd
Sarasita, FL 34232

Tribute Wall

MM

“ *god needed a an angel, she will be missed.*

mary murphy - December 31, 2024 at 05:17 PM

MM

“ *Mary Murphy lit a candle in memory of Rickie Einstein Paley*



mary murphy - December 31, 2024 at 05:14 PM