



Anneliese Otilie Cieslik

May 2, 1938 - February 14, 2025

Anneliese Otilie Cieslik, age 86, of White Plains, MD, passed away on February 14, 2025, from complications of dementia.

Anneliese was born in Murrhardt, Germany, on May 2, 1938, to Wilhelm and Karoline (Schaal) Walter. She grew up in Germany during the tumultuous years of World War II, often recalling the hardships of her childhood, including daily runs to bomb shelters, hiding beneath desks at school, food shortages, and living off milk from the family cow, Sheckele.

Following the war, she remained in Germany until meeting the man of her dreams, Albert Cieslik. She was working in a small retail shop, window dressing, when this dashing young man of 34 said "how much for the lady in the window". She fell for the line, and they later fell in love, moving to Canada together in 1960 and later relocating to the United States, where work opportunities were plentiful. They married and had two children: Cornelia Carmen (Barnas) and Ricky Wilhelm. They settled in White Plains, MD, in 1971, where Anneliese and Albert (who passed away in 2003) spent the remainder of their lives. Anneliese became a U.S. citizen in 1983 and was proud of her American identity. During her later years, in the advanced stages of dementia, she could often be found praying aloud for the United States and saying, "God bless America!"

Anneliese worked until the age of 70, cleaning houses and doctors' offices,

and ironing linens and waitstaff jackets for a renowned caterer who frequently hosted events at the White House and for presidential inaugurations. Along the way, she befriended all those she worked for, often staying after work just to chat with her clients-turned-friends. Even after losing most of her eyesight at the age of 62 due to a rare eye disease, she continued working, relying on her daughter or son-in-law to chauffeur her to her clients' homes.

Anneliese had a deep love for gardening. She could often be found weeding or planting, and it was common for passersby to stop and compliment her on the beauty of her home and flowers. This praise brought her immense pride and fueled her passion. She was also an exceptional cook and baker, hosting holiday meals with ease. Anneliese would proudly boast that she never needed recipes, simply adding a dash here and a pinch there—old-school, but always perfect. Her plum cake and Black Forest cake were legendary. Her love for baking was no surprise, as one of her brothers owned a bakery back in Germany.

Anneliese was preceded in death by her parents, Wilhelm, and Karoline; her brothers Kurt and Wilhelm; her sister Ottilia; her husband Albert; and her daughter Cornelia (Barnas).

She is survived by her son-in-law Robert Barnas, his daughter Ashley (and her husband Steve) and their son Noah; his son Michael (and his wife Lauren) and their son Tilghman, along with a baby boy on the way; son Ricky and his former wife Patricia, their daughter Cassie (and her husband Logan), and their sons Thomas and Hudson; nephews and nieces.

Visitation will be held at Raymond Funeral Service, P.A., 5635 Washington Avenue, La Plata, MD 20646 on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, from 6-8 p.m., with prayers and eulogy starting at 7 p.m.

The funeral mass will begin at 10 a.m. February 27, 2025, at Sacred Heart Church at 201 St. Mary's Avenue, La Plata, MD 20646, with burial immediately thereafter at St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery at 4590 St. Joseph Way Pomfret, MD 20675.

Memorial contributions in Anneliese's name may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at Online Donations - St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph's Catholic Church Cemetery

4590 St. Joseph's Way
Pomfret, MD 20675
<http://stjoepomfret.weconnect.com/>

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **26**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Raymond Funeral Service Chapel
5635 Washington Avenue
La Plata, MD 20646
business.office@raymondfuneral.com
<http://www.raymondfuneralservice.com>

With Prayers and Eulogy starting at 7:00PM.

Mass of Christian Burial

FEB **27**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
201 St Marys Ave
La Plata, MD 20646
(301) 934-2261

Tribute Wall

“ PART 1 OF 3 - Eulogy from Rob, her son-in-law

Oma was born in May 1938 in Murrhardt, Germany, just 16 months before Germany invaded Poland starting WWII. In 1940, the allied forces started bringing the war back to Germany with bombing raids of their own. It wasn't until May 1945 that the war ended in Europe, just a few days after Oma's 7th birthday. Imagine you and I celebrating 6 of our first 7 birthdays with bombs dropping from the sky and wondering if any were going to land on our house; living off the milk from our family cow and often wondering if food would be available to feed our family for the coming days and weeks ahead. Amazingly, Oma had quite a recollection of those early years, and not many that were good. Towards the end of her life here on Earth, Oma was terrified of thunderstorms and often sought comfort from her Connie who would do her best to calm her fears explaining it was only thunder, lightning, and rainfall, and not bombs dropping from the sky. One of the many things we learned of Dementia as we watched Oma fight this horrible disease is how the mind regresses with each passing day, sometimes recalling with great detail events from 80 years prior. Oma would tell us one day her frightening childhood memories during those very early years – running with her brothers to bomb shelters or hiding under desks while the bomb sirens screamed through the town, then the next day tell us a story, again, how she met her wonderful husband, Albert, while working in a retail store. The trauma she recalled so vividly the day before had disappeared from her recent memory and wouldn't resurface again for perhaps months when the next thunderstorm would pop up. Such was her battle with dementia that lasted for about 4 years. Oma loved her husband, whom she affectionately called Schatz, dearly, and often told us how much she missed him. Bup was 12 years older than Oma and died at age 77 in 2003. She never stopped talking about her love for him, even late into her battle. It seems true love is more powerful than even dementia. Oma wasn't known for her sense of humor – if you search Youtube for German comedians, the hits will be sparse! But she would laugh hysterically year after year at the exact same scenes in The Sound

of Music, the movie we have watched at our annual New Year's Eve party at our house for as long as I can remember. She laughed like she saw the scenes for the first time, and this was BEFORE her dementia set in!

Oma always had a love of gardening and could grow a plant on a rock. Having a green thumb was her super-power. When she was healthy and able to plant, weed and water, we would buy her flats of flowers and bags of soil each spring and let her have at it. When she got to be too weak and unbalanced to do the gardening, Connie would plant all the flowers for her in her boxes along the front patio, then would buy her a dozen ferns that we would hang above the boxes. This made her so happy, that she could sit on the front patio and still enjoy the flowers and ferns, birds and butterflies.

Oma was a great cook – she loved holidays and family dinners, and she would make roast and spätzle's, or noodles, or mashed potatoes - she wanted to please everyone at the table and so would cook many different things!

She was also an amazing "old school" baker, never using recipes for anything, taking pride in that fact. Honestly, I wish she had written down the recipe for her magical plum cake as that was my favorite dessert to ever come out of her oven. Of course, her Black Forest Cake was also fantastic, and something she made at every holiday meal. My Dad would call her cake "hem-le-motten", which was Swedish for Food of the Gods, and I think he was right.

Robert Barnas - March 07, 2025 at 07:08 PM

“ PART 2 OF 3 - Eulogy from Rob, her son-in-law

Oma loved watching TV, especially the Walton's, Little House on the Prairie, and Andy Griffith. She also loved her Sweet Red wine, which she would drink two glasses every day until she started losing her balance with age and thought she'd better give that up or end up on the floor! Before she developed a taste for the sweet red wine, she would "drink a schnapps" every night before bed which she said would help her sleep. I think taking a shot of liquor before bed would help anyone sleep! Thankfully she gave that up too as her legs started failing.

Thinking back through the years, we have quite a few memories of Oma. One Thanksgiving dinner a few years back we were just chatting, and Ashley was testing out some German words she had recently learned on a language app, while Oma was completely silent. Someone commented about Ashley's wonderful new ability, then Oma chimed in out of the blue saying, "Michael is fluent in German". We all busted up laughing. The funny part was the only German Mikey knows is what I taught him, "Auf die nase mit einem gummischlauch", which loosely translated means "up your nose with a rubber hose". It was even funnier because Oma was serious! Oma loved her some Steve – Ashley's husband. She always asked him if he was Mexican, why he always wore a hat, and told him he needed to shave. No idea where the Mexican question came from, he wore a hat to keep the sun out of his eyes, and he shaved for Jesus on Sundays. When Oma was still at home and refusing to eat in the very late stage of dementia, Steve would make her laugh by putting food on a spoon and say "aufmachen, hier kommt der Zug" which translates to "open up, here comes the train!" It was quite the sight to see.

Michael recalls all the amazing breakfasts cooked by Oma or Opa while he and Ash would be over there before school, and his lunch dates with Oma after him driving her for her hair appointments while in high school. Oma lost most of her eyesight around the year 2000 and so needed a driver for every errand which led to some solid quality time with Oma for Mike and Ashley as her chauffeurs.

Ashley recalls how, at every meal and every party, Oma would be given a plate of food and immediately say, "Ach, this is too much – who wants this and that", trying to pawn off the food on anyone nearby before even starting to eat.

We all recall Oma's obsession with the lotto. I can't even count the number of times she had me stop and get a ticket for her on the way home because the jackpot was so big. I'm know Connie and the kids did their share of lotto-ticket-buying as well during their shuttle services!

Ashley recalls how patient Mikey was with Oma while grocery shopping, she asking how much every little thing cost and Mikey calmly answering. Ashley would just grab the items, put them in the cart and say, "let's go!" I think she learned that from me - ain't nobody got time to worry about the cost of a few strawberries - whereas Michael had the patience of a saint.

I mentioned that Oma lost most of her sight around year 2000, and she always said she was "legally blind". She WAS legally blind, but never let on that she could see better than we thought. She swore she couldn't see numbers on the telephone – even the huge button version for the blind – but she could tell when Connie's roots were gray and needed to be colored or see me 20' away and wonder why I was wearing shorts when it was 30 degrees outside. Last fall she told Connie the policeman across the street was watching her on her front porch, over 200' away. He actually WAS, as we asked him and Ellen, her neighbors, to keep an eye on her for us whenever they were out and about. To this day, I couldn't even tell you how blind she really was!!

Robert Barnas - March 07, 2025 at 07:06 PM

“ PART 3 OF 3 - Eulogy from Rob, her son-in-law

Lauren recalled watching Oma dance with our friend Vance at hers and Mike's wedding in 2017, the last time she actually danced. She was in great health then, truly enjoyed the day, and danced for quite a while.

She attended Ashley and Steve's wedding too, in 2023, but from a wheelchair, and sadly couldn't remember it the next day.

In casual conversation, I would tell Oma how the kids were doing and she would ask about Hillman and tell me that's a German name. I would say "Oma, it's Tilghman, with a T, and she would say, "Ohhhh, Tilghman, with a T". We had this exact conversation no less than 50 times and I always got a kick out of it.

In the last few months of 2024, the only thing that made Oma happy was seeing her Tilly and her Noah, two of her great grandchildren.

She would be lying in bed, miserable, until Mike and Lauren would bring Tilly to see her or Ash and Steve would go over with Noah. If you've ever seen the movie Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory, you may recall the scene where Grandpa Joe had been lying in bed for 20 years, unable to walk, until Charlie comes in with the Golden ticket. Tilly and Noah were Oma's golden tickets! The

transformation in her demeanor was instant and miraculous, she would sit up and smile ear to ear, and want to get out of bed and go into the family room to properly visit with the babies. We would help her into the walker and into the Family Room where she would say how beautiful they were and she would talk to them as if all was right in her world. Considering how she was doing physically and mentally during this time period, it was something to behold.

By mid-December, Oma's dementia was getting progressive worse requiring more TLC, twice-a-day visits or more depending on how she was doing each day. I would go see here late morning to feed her, make sure the TV was working correctly in case she wanted to watch, refill her drinks, and see if she needed anything before going back to work. My favorite line ever, which she told me on more than one occasion after her refusing to eat what I made for her was, "this is the worst hotel I've ever been in, and the service here is terrible.

I'm not paying the bill". I couldn't help but laugh – inside that is – recalling my conversation with Father Scott about dealing with folks with dementia. He said simply, "we have to live in their world." These few words made perfect sense since the afflicted no longer understand the world in which WE live. We can't get angry with them since they are not themselves and don't understand what they are truly saying, we can't argue with them since they no longer use logic, reasoning, or have rational thoughts. We just have to go with the flow, love them as they are, remember them as they were, and take care of them as we would want our loved ones to take care of us if we were in those same shoes.

Oma, thanks for the memories. May you rest in peace.

Robert Barnas - March 07, 2025 at 07:05 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Anneliese Ottilie Cieslik.

February 26, 2025 at 12:26 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Anneliese Ottilie Cieslik.



February 26, 2025 at 12:26 AM



“ *Pink Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Anneliese Ottilie Cieslik.*



February 21, 2025 at 03:47 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Anneliese Ottilie Cieslik.*



February 21, 2025 at 03:12 PM