



## Elsie Clare Kapanowski

March 1, 1938 - May 26, 2025

Elsie Clare Kapanowski, of Royal Oak, passed away on May 26, 2025.

Born in Stepney, England, on March 1, 1938 Elsie lived a long colorful life of 87 years. Her unique authenticity left a strong and unforgettable impression on everyone she met.

Born and raised in East End London to a large family during World War II she quickly learned the important things in life.

At the age of 21, Elsie married her childhood sweetheart, Len Fisher. His work in the Royal Air Force led them to live in Myhl Village in Germany for the first year of marriage. The pair eventually parted ways.

After working with the U.S. Air Force at RAF Alconbury, she moved to the United States as a nanny, continuing a lifelong journey of nurturing and helping others.

In Michigan, she met and married, William Stanley Kapanowski. As a homemaker, Elsie poured her heart into raising their daughter and being active in organizations such as the PTA and Brownies. She remained dedicated to the care of children while her daughter was young, working in childcare and sharing her gentle spirit with countless families.

Elsie's love for people and her desire to help them extended beyond her home and childcare. After her second divorce she worked countless jobs, sometimes several at once in order to provide for her child. She was a server and hostess in the restaurant industry for many years in the local area, always quick with a smile and kind word for every customer. Elsie worked at Jim Fresard Pontiac Buick Oldsmobile in Royal Oak as a Leasing Liason and later as a Customer Care Representative and made strong friendships along the way. Her last position was as a physical therapist aide at Providence Hospital in Southfield, bringing comfort and encouragement to patients, especially the elderly.

Elsie always stepped up and spoke out on behalf of people and animals, she was a true champion for the underdog. Active in her community, she was known for her generous heart-she wouldn't hesitate to offer a ride, a meal, the last bit of cash in her wallet or the coat off her back to those in need. A passionate friend to animals, Elsie never missed a chance to help or just give a cuddle to any creature in need. She could often be seen taking her family's dogs on long, leisurely walks with the cats following along behind.

She had a great fondness for books often devouring them cover to cover in one sitting. She always had one with her, not wasting a chance to read any amount she could while waiting in a lobby or having a quick bite to eat. Watching movies, especially sci-fi, horror films and animal documentaries, was a past time she enjoyed immensely. She would spend entire weekends lost in a good story or working on a word search puzzle.

Above all, Elsie was a social soul-friendly, outgoing, and endlessly kind. She never met a stranger, her comforting and generous nature often made people so at ease they sometimes shared their life story upon meeting her.

Elsie passed peacefully at home surrounded by her loved ones. She will be deeply missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing her.

Elsie will be remembered as the loving mother of Elisa (Tracy Surgener) Kapanowski. Dear sister of Joan (the late David) Walker and the late Lillian (Thomas) Twiddy, Rosemary (Fred) Saunders, and Vera (Brian) Chamberlain. She is further survived by many nieces and nephews in England.

Visitation for Elsie will be held on Saturday, May 31 from 3 - 7 p.m. and Sunday, June 1 from 12 p.m. until time of service, 2:00 p.m., at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors, 705 W. Eleven Mile Rd. (four blocks east of Woodward), Royal Oak.

Memorial contributions in honor of Elsie can be directed to any of these no kill organizations that give life saving help to animals:

Animal Welfare Society in Madison Heights

[www.animalwelfaresociety.net](http://www.animalwelfaresociety.net)

Michigan Animal Rescue League in Pontiac

[www.marl.org](http://www.marl.org)

New Beginnings Cat Rescue in Royal Oak

[www.Nbarmichigan.org](http://www.Nbarmichigan.org)

The Barn Sanctuary in Chelsea

[www.barnsanctuary.org](http://www.barnsanctuary.org)

Detroit Dog Rescue

<https://g.co/kgs/jNhXHan>

Detroit Alley Cats

<https://detroitalleycats.org/>

A Rejoyceful Rescue

<https://www.rejoycefulrescue.com/>

Make a Difference Rescue

<https://makeadifferencerescue.com/>

Rebel Dogs Detroit

<https://rebeldogsdetroit.com/>

Almost Home Animal Rescue

<https://almosthomeanimals.org/>

Detroit Animal Welfare Group (DAWG)

<https://dawghous.com/>

World Wildlife Fund

<https://www.worldwildlife.org>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 31. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

## Visitation

JUN 1. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

## Funeral Service

JUN 1. 2:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

# Tribute Wall



“ *Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors created a Funeral Service for Elsie Kapanowski in memory of Elsie Clare Kapanowski*



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**Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors** - June 01, 2025 at 10:43 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.

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June 04, 2025 at 10:40 AM



“ *Elsie used to walk her chihuahua dog every evening by my apartment. She was a very kind lady .I enjoyed talking with her. Because of rent plundering in Royal Oak I had to move. I always wondered what happened to her. We need more people like Elsie in this world.*

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**Kevin McMahon** - June 03, 2025 at 10:55 AM



*Hi Kevin, thank you for your kind words about my mom. She touched so many lives, I enjoy hearing from others about her. I wonder if you were the man she spoke of who loved the squirrels as much as she did? I'm happy to mail you her prayer card if you're interested. Thank you - Elisa*

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**Elisa Kapanowski** - June 05, 2025 at 05:21 PM

KM

*Yes that was me. I loved to feed and watch the squirrels . Occasionally Elsie would buy peanuts for me to give the squirrels. I knew she loved all animals. She was a very kind and interesting person. I didn't know her background until I read her obit. I knew by her accent that she was from England but I wish I could have asked her more about her background.After I moved, I would look for her but sadly I never saw her again.*

Kevin McMahon - June 08, 2025 at 10:48 PM

 Sherry Saites

“ *My deepest condolences to the family. I remember Elsie well. She and I were friends for many years. A dear friend and I introduced her to her ex-husband Bill Kapinowski. Some years ago I ran in to Elsie on one of my trips back to Royal Oak and it was a great pleasure to have a bit of time to visit. She was a wonderful woman with a beautiful soul. May she rest in peace.*

Sherry Saites - June 01, 2025 at 12:01 PM

LK

*Hi Sherry,  
Thank you for your kind words about my mother. I would love to speak to you, if possible. If you are interested, please let me know how to contact you.  
Thank you,  
Lisa Kapanowski*

lisa Kapanowski - August 17, 2025 at 03:02 PM

DC

“ *Elsie was a sweet, loving, big hearted lady, who became a fearless, unstoppable warrior when she believed any being needed her. Safe journey Elsie*

Deb G, Sarah Care - May 31, 2025 at 11:24 AM

AA

“ Alyssa A. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.

Alyssa A. - May 31, 2025 at 09:29 AM

SK

“ Susan K. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.

Susan K. - May 31, 2025 at 09:17 AM

LW

“ Lynsey Widgren lit a candle in memory of Elsie Clare Kapanowski



Lynsey Widgren - May 30, 2025 at 08:39 PM

LW

“ I met Elsie for the first time in 2012 when my husband Kenny, brought her home from auto zone. We had tea and instantly became family, my second English mumma. Lisa and i became sisters. Thank you Elsie for the manytimes you came over and read with Lily, or came to the zoo with us. When you came to the grandparents event at Lilys school becauae my mum or dad couldnt attend. We miss you Elsie.

Lynsey Widgren - May 30, 2025 at 08:38 PM

LW

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Lynsey Widgren - May 30, 2025 at 08:34 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.



May 30, 2025 at 05:36 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.

May 30, 2025 at 05:36 PM

HB

“ Heather Barnes purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.



Heather Barnes - May 30, 2025 at 03:57 PM

HB

“ Heather Barnes planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elsie Clare Kapanowski.

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**Heather Barnes** - May 30, 2025 at 03:57 PM