

Dr. Jacqueline Yvette Hélène Byrne

July 16, 1934 – May 22, 2026

Casa Grande, Arizona – Dr. Jacqueline Yvette Hélène Byrne, 91, passed away peacefully at her home on May 22, 2026.

Jacqueline was born on July 16, 1934, in Marchefroy, France. She attended a one-room schoolhouse in her village before continuing her education in Dreux, France. Her lifelong love of learning never faded. At the age of 74, she earned her Doctorate in French Literature from the State University of New York College, fulfilling a dream that reflected her dedication to education and personal growth. She later authored a memoir of her early life entitled *I Was Born in Marchefroy*.

As a young girl growing up in France during Nazi occupation, Jacqueline experienced hardships that most people today can scarcely imagine. Her brother was sent to a work camp during the war. Her father worked on farms, and her mother took whatever jobs she could find to help the family survive. Those difficult years helped shape the resilience, determination, and compassion that defined Jacqueline throughout her life.

While living in France, Jacqueline met the love of her life, James Francis Byrne, an American soldier stationed there with the United States Army. Their love story led to a marriage that spanned more than 50 years, filled with devotion, partnership, and family.

Teaching and education were Jacqueline's greatest passions. She dedicated more than 50 years to educating and inspiring young people. During her distinguished career, she taught in Hempstead and Hartford, New York, as well as at Casa Grande Union High School, Vista Grande High School, and Mission Heights Preparatory High School in Arizona. Even after retirement, she continued serving her community as a substitute teacher in Casa Grande, sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm with generations of students.

Jacqueline was a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Post 1677 in Casa Grande, Arizona, and a member of the New York State Teachers' Retirement Association.

She is survived by her loving children, Gaelle (Ralph) Freer and Hugues Byrne; her favorite daughter-in-law, Lori Byrne (who was also her only daughter-in-law); her beloved grandchildren, Susan (Dan) Master Csuka, Hugues (Amy) Byrne II, Alexander Freer, and Christopher (Celia) Byrne; and her cherished great-grandchildren, Elliot Csuka and Lillian Byrne. She also leaves behind her beloved younger brother, Jacques Le Vaillant, and her nephew, Guy Le Vaillant.

Jacqueline was preceded in death by her devoted husband, James Francis Byrne; her daughter, Nathalie Strand; her parents, Yves Le Vaillant and Marie Le Poulichet Le Vaillant; and her older brothers, Joseph Le Vaillant and Jean Le Vaillant.

A graveside service will be held on Friday, June 5, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at Mountain View Cemetery, 15506 West Skyway Avenue, Casa Grande, Arizona. A reception celebrating Jacqueline's life will follow at the home of Hugues and Lori Byrne, 1549 E. Prickly Pear Place, Casa Grande, Arizona 85122.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Jacqueline's honor to support the Voice of Democracy Scholarship Program through the Veterans of Foreign Wars Arizona Department, reflecting her lifelong commitment to education and the opportunities it provides to future generations.

Jacqueline's life was a testament to perseverance, education, service, and love. From a small village in wartime France to a lifetime spent shaping young minds, she touched countless lives and leaves behind a legacy that will continue through her family, her students, and all those fortunate enough to have known her.

