



*Sarah Rogers*

*1906 – 1988*

*Harry Rogers*

*1909 – 1993*

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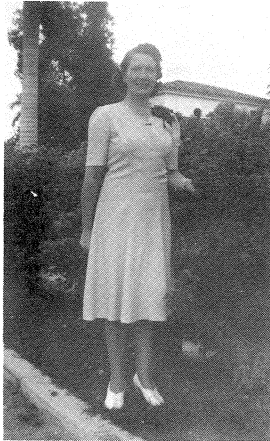
Founders of the  
Sarah and Harry Rogers Fund in  
THE NEW YORK COMMUNITY TRUST  
Two Park Avenue  
New York, New York 10016

Once upon a time . . . When subways were a nickel and movies a quarter. When the Dodgers lived in Brooklyn. When Long Island was mostly farmland.

The marriage of Sarah and Harry Rogers was a storybook romance. He was a prince of the streets, a New York City cabby—a big, soft-spoken, but nevertheless garrulous, first-generation Irishman who loved to tell tales, visit his mother, and brag about the Yankees. She was an Irish refugee, a shy, sincere, and hard-working nurse to the infirm and elderly. Together they wrote a story of lifelong love and mutual regard, lived out for the most part in obscurity, until a surprise ending which allows their generous natures to live on in the form of the Sarah and Harry Rogers Fund.

Sarah was born in Donegal, Ireland, on St. Patrick's Day, 1906. Raised on a farm by her parents, John and Mariah, she helped them run the farm until she left home at the age of 14. In the Ireland of 1920, space as well as money was in short supply; her brother was getting married,

and his wife was moving into the family homestead. Finding it difficult to secure employment, Sarah emigrated to the U.S. in 1927. She first lived in Boston, working as a housekeeper for Bishop Lawrence, Boston's leading Episcopal clergyman. She then became a licensed practical



*Sarah in Florida  
in the early 40s.*

nurse and moved to New York to work as a home care nurse.

Harry was a born and bred New Yorker. Although he "never had a nickel," in the words of his nephew, John Ring, he was the main source of support for a single-parent home of six brothers and sisters.

His family came first:

he postponed his own marriage for six months to let a sister graduate first from college, and visited his mother, taking her to Bingo three or four nights a week until her death.

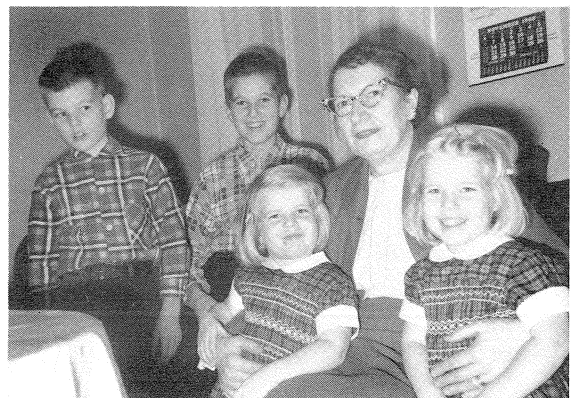
Harry and Sarah's first meeting took place in what passed for a prince's carriage: Harry's taxicab. Sarah was a passenger. They started talking, he asked her for a date; thus began a conversation that lasted almost 40 years. They were married in September 1949 in the rectory of the Church of the Incarnation in Washington Heights—in the rectory because Sarah

was a Protestant. They lived in an apartment on 111th Street between Amsterdam and Broadway. Being of different faiths—she attended St. John the Divine, he the Church of the Holy Ascension—they alternated churches every Sunday.

There was one word to describe their relationship: inseparable. On weekends, they loved to play bridge and canasta together with friends. Another favorite activity was renting horses for long rides in Central Park. Except for his garrulousness and her reserve, they shared similarities, most notably generous natures. Harry's niece, Carol Sarel, remembers that "both were incredibly honest, sincere, and generous people. Both put the care and welfare of others ahead of themselves. Both loved rendering assistance to others."

Good feelings and high praise for Harry and Sarah were not just restricted to their families. Sarah's career as a home

*Sarah with her grandnephews and grandnieces  
in 1960.*



care nurse brought her into the Park Avenue homes of the wealthy, including the descendants of Eli Lilly, the pharmaceutical company founder. As her niece Sarah Cassidy explained: "She was a very bright person. In addition to being a genuinely caring person, she was extremely frugal, knew how to handle money, made good use of her time, and was extremely honest."

The surprise ending to the story of Harry and Sarah was that when they died—Sarah in 1988 and Harry in 1993—



*Harry and Sarah in 1967.*

the estate of the nurse and the cabby was worth more than \$2 million. The qualities that brought them together and endeared them to their families were also qualities that won the hearts of Sarah's patients. They showed their appreciation by remembering her in their wills.

Carol Sarel, Harry's niece, remembers the Rogers' lives as remaining unchanged by money. Sarah's dream was to move to

Long Island and buy a house. Harry protested that he—the cabby who knew every nook and cranny of New York—would get lost "out there." So they stayed on 111th Street and lived out the lives they had built together.

When Sarah set up the Sarah and Harry Rogers Fund in her will, their mutual concern for the environment led to the fund's purpose: for maintenance and upkeep of New York City parks and to protect the City's air and water.

*The New York Community Trust  
is a community foundation  
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for charitable funds.*

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