Betsy Palmer

East Chicago, Indiana
(Nov 1, 1926 – May 26, 2015)

Photo Courtesy: The Northwest Indiana Times

Betsy Palmer is probably best known for playing Jason Voorhees' mother in the horror film *Friday the 13th* (1980), but her career as an actress began many years before.

Palmer was born Patricia Betsy Hrunek on November 1, 1926, in East Chicago, Indiana, to Marie, who launched the Chicago Business College, and Rudolph Vincent Hrunek, a Czech-born industrial chemist, who later became a stay-at-home father. They moved to the Hessville neighborhood in Hammond, Indiana. There, she attended Warren G. Harding Elementary School in Hammond.

Palmer began acting in summer stock in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, then in winter stock at The Woodstock Opera House in Woodstock, Illinois, with Paul Newman, and then in summer stock in Chicago with Imogene Coca. Palmer got her first television acting job in 1951 when she joined the cast of the 15-minute weekday television soap opera, *Miss Susan*. Among her many acting credits, Palmer played a young female officer opposite Jack Lemmon in *Mister Roberts* (1955), and appeared in another war film the same year, *The Long Gray Line* (1955). Throughout the late 1950s, Palmer was recognized as a news reporter on Today (1952) on NBC, then became largely involved in television. She remained in made-for-TV films and notable guest appearances, before playing the murderous avenging mother, Mrs. Voorhees, in the horror film *Friday the 13th* (1980). She also continued working in television, and appearing in low-budget films like *The Fear: Resurrection* (1999). Palmer spent her later years between her home in New York City and Sedona, Arizona.

Betsy Palmer died of natural causes on a Friday, May 29, 2015, in Danbury, Connecticut.

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Sources:
▪ IMDB.com Website (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0658133/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1)
▪ "Actress Betsy Palmer, killer cook in 'Friday the 13t, dies," Mary-of-the-Woods (https://chicago.suntimes.com/entertainment/actress-bestsy-palmer-killer-cook-in-friday-the-13th-dies/)