



Emily A. Williams

October 20, 1931 - August 24, 2015

Emily Anne Williams died on August 24, 2015 at Virtua Memorial Hospital in Mount Holly, NJ. She was 83. Emily was born in Philadelphia, PA, but always considered Rancocas Village her home. She referred to it as a magical place.

Emily came to Rancocas as an infant with her parents, Norman and Emily Wiggins. She grew up in the Village, attending grade school in Mt. Holly. She went away to attend George School in Newtown, PA and then Moore College of Art in Philadelphia, where she received her BFA. She went on to receive her master's degree in art education from the University of Pennsylvania. She met her husband, Aldy while at Penn. They decided to run off and get married in Snow Hill, MD, beginning their life together with a sense of adventure and fun. They set up house in Aldy's hometown of Rochester, NY for a couple of years.

As a young family, they moved to the Masonville-Rancocas Woods area, but eventually returned to settle in her beloved Rancocas. Emily taught art briefly at Lakewood, NJ Junior and Senior High Schools. Dissatisfied with the rigid curriculum of public school and wanting to be home to raise her children, she began teaching art her own way with classes on Saturday mornings for young people at her home on Second Street in the early 1960's. Mentoring her students went beyond teaching technique. Emily taught art history and appreciation and although she was a masterful water colorist, she taught other

mediums as well. She was nurturing and inspiring but she didn't placate. She was a gentle critic bringing the best out of her students and her children as well. There were trips to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art and other galleries in Philadelphia. Lynn and Liz intermittently participated as students, and Lynn recalls modeling many times. Lynn and Liz share memories of plein air painting at Hollingshead's barn in Moorestown and the Riverton Yacht Club, to name a few. Emily was proud of both Liz and Lynn who have each pursued careers and interests in art and design. The sisters recall that no Saturday art class was without homemade treats, as the art of cooking was important to their mother.

Emily was deeply inspired by Julia Child and became a long time member of a gourmet club through invitation from Sophia, the mother of her beloved art student, Dean. Emily often spoke of how gifted Dean was and treasured a poem he wrote about her years after the classes ceased. It hung in a frame in the kitchen by the back door which she passed through daily to feed the birds. Emily was a naturalist of sorts, with a passion for life of all creatures great and small. Along with the birds, she loved her pets which even included spiders and other creepy crawlies. Emily particularly loved dogs. When the household was no longer with pets, she took the dogs of friends into her home for tender loving care, when their families were away.

A practicing Quaker, Emily served on the School Committees of Rancocas Friends School and Moorestown Friends School. She was a pragmatist and a janusian thinker, always seeing and weighing more than one perspective. Emily was an intellectual who enjoyed political debate, art and music (particularly avant garde orchestral compositions), but she delighted in planning menus and hosting dinner parties with the greatest of passion. She was an avid reader and loved playing bridge with friends. She was a student and a teacher, always eager to learn new things and to share them but she

never embraced technology, surfed the net or used email! In fact, if anyone ever asked for her email she'd reply with a tone of disdain. She liked things simple. Email was not a necessity for Emily who was the best correspondent. She wrote witty letters with artistry like the accomplished painter she was. A great conversationalist, she was able to engage in dialogue with anyone on almost any topic.

Emily found humor easily in every aspect of her life and was eager to make lemonade when life threw lemons her way. Her love of art merged with her aesthetic affinity for fashion. She made most of her own clothes. She was an accomplished seamstress, and for many years had her own cottage business performing alterations and dressmaking from her home on Main Street. Emily loved the challenge of a complex pattern, often tweaking it and making it her own, or re-cutting a vintage wedding dress for a sentimental bride. Working with the finest of textiles was a passion, similar to her love of cooking with challenging and unique ingredients. She always had an array of herbs at hand as gardening was a favorite pastime. Emily's garden had a variety of daffodils that would rival those of Longwood Gardens, but she was especially fond of herbs and had quite a garden of both medicinal and culinary plants. She wrote an article on herbs for her Tai Chi Club Newsletter. Emily never exercised. She was naturally fit, but in her late 60s and 70s she found tai chi to be of benefit both physically and mentally.

Emily and Aldy were married for 60 years and for at least half that time they were supporters of the Philadelphia Orchestra, holding seasons' tickets. They also made excellent travel companions for one another. Emily shared her love of art and culture with Aldy. There was never a trip that didn't include her guided tours through museums.

Emily is predeceased by her husband, Alfred Aldridge Williams. She is

survived by her two daughters and their husbands, Elizabeth and Howard Maresch, Carolynn and Gregg Dunham, three grandchildren, Carolyn and Andrew Laich, Jonathan Maresch, and Alexandra Dunham, one great grandson, Ryan Laich, and a new great granddaughter, Emily Laich arriving in November.

A memorial service will be held at 3 p.m., Saturday, October 10th, at the Rancocas Village Community Center, 203 Main St., Rancocas, NJ 08073. Contributions in her name may be made to the Animal Welfare Association, 509 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043. <https://www.awanj.org/ways-to-help/make-a-memorial-or-tribute-gift>

Previous Events

Service

OCT **10**. 3:00 PM (ET)

Rancocas Community Center
Main Street
Village of Rancocas, NJ 08073

Tribute Wall



“ *Emily A. Williams*

October 29, 2022 at 11:57 AM



“ *Emily A. Williams*

October 29, 2022 at 09:53 AM