

Cynthia Lynne Harrington was born in Brooklyn, New York on May 23rd, 1938: the third daughter of R. Paul Harrington and Emogene Dyson Harrington. She spent her childhood in Caldwell, New Jersey and Marlboro, Vermont, where her parents joined their best friends, Stanley and Josephine Banks, in purchasing a disused two-family farm when Lynne was two years old. They called this special place Treadmill Farm (after a two-horse treadmill they found in the barn) and it would become Lynne's most beloved home for the next 80 years.

At "the Farm," together with her sisters Marigene and Julia (Judy), the young Lynne helped her mother to tend a large victory garden during the Second World War while her father worked for the fledgling U.S. Air Force. When he became one of the first professors of aeronautical engineering, at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the family moved to Troy, New York, and continued to spend weekends and holidays at the old Snow House on the Farm, while the Banks family was resident at the old Brown House across the abandoned coach road. The seeds of Lynne's lifelong passion for gardening were planted during these years, as was her fondness for picking berries and preserving jam.

Lynne was educated at Emma Willard School, where she loved to take part in dramatic productions. Like her sisters, she continued her education at Mount Holyoke College, where she majored in chemistry. During her junior year, she also attended the Université libre de Belgique in Brussels, where her father was acting as a special advisor to the Belgian government. This formative time was one that she often recalled, and it took on new significance when her youngest daughter later spent five years in Belgium with her own family, working at NATO's operational headquarters.

After her college graduation in 1960, Lynne put her B.A. degree to work at the General Electric Research Lab in Niskayuna, New York, where she was one of just a few female chemists. There, she met a metallurgical engineer from Queens, New York: Ernest (Ernie) Michael Symes, a graduate of Columbia University. They were married on June 20th, 1964, and became the parents of three daughters: Carol Lynne (1966), Julia Ann (1968), and Kimberly Gene (1971).

Lynne imbued her daughters and her city-bred husband with her own love of Vermont. As the family moved to Topsfield, Massachusetts and then to Guilford, Connecticut, Treadmill Farm continued to be a haven for weekends, holidays, and especially the long summer vacations. Lynne and her sisters remained close, and her daughters grew up alongside their cousins, forming special bonds.

In Guilford, Lynne reinvented herself as a gifted special education tutor and committed Girl Scout troupe leader and regional coordinator for over ten years. She took enormous pleasure in helping students succeed in school and, as mentor to girls and young women, she emphasized the importance of confidence and self-reliance. Lynne became locally famous for her green thumb, her neighborliness and kindness, and her warm hospitality. Many of the friendships that she and Ernie forged in Guilford during these years became lasting ones. Indeed, when Ernie retired from his position at Schick in 2000, they decided to join friends who had moved to the Winding River community near Wilmington, North Carolina. They also traveled widely in Europe during these years.

At the same time, Lynne's attachment to Marlboro and the Farm only deepened. After the untimely death of her childhood playmate, Julia Banks Bryce, a noted local artist, the house across the lawn was eventually put up for sale. Fortuitously, she and Ernie were able to purchase it, keeping Treadmill Farm together.

In 2014, Lynne and Ernie decided to move permanently to Marlboro. Joyful to be at home in Vermont for good, Lynne spent the summers improving and expanding the ambitious perennial beds at Treadmill Farm. A brilliant gardener, she was especially proud of her beautiful abundance of daylilies. Lynne and Ernie especially relished the strengthening of their ties with old and new friends in Marlboro, where they have long been members of the Ames Hill Association and the Marlboro Meeting House. Above all, they have rejoiced in their granddaughter, Abigail Symes Maedje, born in 2012.

Lynne's health began to decline in November of 2019, when she was hospitalized with a serious infection for several weeks. She remained cheerful and full of plans throughout the ensuing winter, and spent nearly every waking hour of the spring and summer in her gardens or on the little front porch. Another prolonged period of hospitalization began in August, during which she continued to hope and work for a return home. She passed away on the evening of November 2nd at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, with her husband and three daughters in attendance.

Lynne is survived by her husband Ernest; her daughters Carol, Julia, and Kimberly and their respective husbands Thomas Wilson, Patrick Moreland, and Richard Maedje; her granddaughter, Abigail; her sisters, Marigene Harrington Butler and Julia Harrington Kilby; her brother-in-law, Gordon Kilby; her cousin, Margaret Tucker Gelin; and many well-loved nieces and nephews.

A service and interment will be held for the immediate family only.

Contributions in Lynne's memory can be made to her church, The Marlboro Meeting House, P.O. Box 64, Marlboro, VT 05344.

<https://www.atamaniuk.com/obituaries/Lynne-Symes?obId=18876884>

(From Atamaniuk Funeral Home)