

In Memoriam Tributes - Class of 1971



9/8/2022 Lauren Hewitt

Winter 2023 Quarterly (reported by Scribe, L. Keown): I received an email from the husband of Lauren Hewitt, who passed away on September 8, 2022 after a 3-month fight against cancer of unknown origin. He shared that Lauren earned a Master of Philosophy in History from Columbia University in 1974, and a Doctor of Laws from Hofstra University in 1994. She practiced law until shortly before she became ill with cancer. She is survived by an extended family of two sons and their wives, six grandchildren, a sister and a brother.



6/15/2023 Marcia Mead Lebre

Fall 2023 Quarterly (reported by Scribe, L. Keown): Sadly, Marcia Mead Lebre passed away on June 15th of this year in Paris, France. While with us, Marcia helped with our Junior Show and served as head of the Judicial Board our senior year, Marcia received the Alumnae Medal of Honor in 1996 at our 25th reunion for her devotion to Mount Holyoke after graduation. Marcia resided in France after graduation with her husband, Gerard, whom she met during the summer of our junior year working at a restaurant on Cape Cod. In France, Marcia started the Mount Holyoke Club of France and the Paris Writers Workshop where she often read her own poetry. She also volunteered at the American Library in Paris. Marcia kept her Mount Holyoke roots well nurtured hosting Thanksgiving dinners for MHC grads in Paris at the restaurant she and Gerard owned. Tributes came via email from France including those of Josette Ngan Caussiol '69 "We first met at the swimming pool, during scuba diving classes in the fall of 1968. Imagine, scuba diving for 2 ladies more than half a century ago. Our Alma Mater has always been ahead of its time." A colleague from the Paris Writers Workshop recalls her as "soft-spoken and gracious." Marcia's friends from our class responded with touching memories. Emily Young wrote "Marcia and I met our freshman year in MacGregor. She was quiet and soft-spoken with a gentle giggle. We remained friends throughout our four years on campus and then lost touch until our virtual 50th Reunion." Sally Wakefield Munford recalled her memories of a spring break sun tan challenge. "I was going home to Texas, and she was going to Florida. Texas had an unusually cold spring break, so the only color I got while sunbathing was blue. Marcia came back with a glorious golden Florida tan." Laurie-Smith Frailey remembers Marcia as a "person of depth and quiet dignity." Suzy Wanner Cook and her husband remember dining with Marcia and Gerard at their "successful and amazing restaurant in Paris." Linda Scott and Marcia were roommates their first two years and neighbors in singles for the last two. Linda writes "I do know she very much wanted to come to our on-campus 50th reunion, but was not well enough to travel then. Sally Wakefield Munford, Emily Young and I made a plan to bring a teddy bear to represent Marcia at the event. We took the bear to all the events and took pictures. As I was readying a box to mail to Marcia post-reunion, an email arrived from Gerard telling me that Marcia was gone. The box went to France, where I hope her family will know that we cherished her and kept her with us symbolically at the reunion.'



7/16/2023 Nancy Richards

Winter 2023 Quarterly (reported by Scribe, L. Keown): Susan Young Gaudiello shared the memories of her senior roommate Nancy Richards, who passed away in July. Although they had not been together for many years after graduation, they were able to attend our 45th reunion together. Susan writes ‘I picked her up at her condo in Tewksbury and we drove to the event together, talking so intently that I missed the exit. I think we hardly stopped talking till I dropped her off on the Sunday.’ After graduation, Nancy earned a Master’s in Library Science and spent the majority of her career at Memorial Hall Library in Andover, MA.



3/22/2024 Joann Otto

Summer 2024 Quarterly (reported by Scribe, L. Keown): Joann Otto passed away unexpectedly March 22, 2024 in Bellingham, WA. Joann’s closest friend, Jenny Masur, initially shared the sad news. Joann had been a professor at Western Washington University since 2004 where she chaired the Department of Biology until her retirement in 2016. Joann was a respected scholar and leader at WWU and accolades of her impact and contributions to the University were shared on the University website at <https://news.wvu.edu/in-memoriam-joann-otto>. Joann’s family shared an opportunity for her classmates to participate in a Zoom memorial held in her honor. She is survived by her family including siblings, nieces, nephews, partners and friends.

Several of Joann’s Torrey freshmen and 1837 senior sisters shared tributes to her. Mary McDowell writes that Joann was a ‘serious student and a person with gravitas and presence... which translated into a most wry wit and a memorable love of laughter!’ Echoing Mary’s recollections was Marian Strobel whose comments recall a fond memory of our senior year. ‘I was in Texas this year visiting family. One night we were watching an old “Columbo” TV show. That brought up the topic of favorite old detective series. My sister, out of the blue, said that she remembered me talking about a college friend from 1837 Hall who borrowed my television set every Saturday night to watch “Mannix.” I laughed and said that was Joann Otto. It was eerie—the next morning I found out about Joann’s passing. She was a real Biology rock star always working in the lab. Her weekly treat was that hour with “Mannix.” I was so pleased to allow Joann to have that fun.’ Mari Miya recalled ‘I don’t think I ever saw Joann without a smile on her face.’ Susan Munsell Hollingshead expressed sadness at Joann’s passing as well. The Climate Change Group has established a fund in Joann’s honor as Joann was a valued member of this group. The Group has created The Isabelle Baird Sprague Fund for student research in the biological sciences, in memory of Joann Otto. Rebecca Ritchie Cutting reports Joann named Dr. Sprague as an influential and inspirational teacher during her four years at MHC.