

ANN BALDWIN TAYLOR

September 17, 1923 - July 14, 2023



Ann Baldwin Taylor, longtime director of the Children's School, the laboratory school at Carnegie Mellon University, has passed away at 99 and 10 months. She was a woman with large appetites for connecting people, for sharing knowledge, for experiencing the world through travel. Her taste for coffee and chocolate was legendary.

Ann Elizabeth Baldwin was born in Mount Union, Pennsylvania, the third of four children. Her parents were Nell Ross (Appleby) Baldwin, a schoolteacher, and Charles Hezekiah Baldwin, an entomologist who worked for the state of Indiana before returning to Mount Union, where he was a builder (Baldwin Lumber).

During World War II, Ann and her older sister, Mary, worked at the John R. Wald defense plant in Tyrone, Pennsylvania; her right index finger was crushed by a press and the top half of the finger had to be amputated. She used the compensation to help pay her tuition at Shippensburg State College. Ann completed her teaching degree in 1945, fulfilling an agreement with her parents that she could marry her high school sweetheart, Robert S. Taylor, and move to the Air Force base in Selma, Alabama, as long as she returned to Shippensburg when the semester started.

After the war, while Bob was completing his training as an architect at Princeton, she taught school. Bob designed a house for them on a street north of campus, and together they helped to build it, pouring concrete and laying bricks. They moved to Pittsburgh in 1949 for Bob's first teaching job, at what was then Carnegie Tech. They lived in a garage apartment on Westminster Place, and about a year after their first child was born, they bought a house around the corner on St. James Street in Shadyside. Ann ran the Sunday School kindergarten at Shadyside Presbyterian Church; she served in that role for 25 years. This is where she formed important friendships, with Marge Mercer, who founded the Shadyside Church Nursery School, and with Tallu Fish Scott, who was the director there for many years.

In 1959, they moved back to Princeton, where Bob became an associate professor of architecture, and she taught fourth grade at Nassau Street School. In 1962, they were once again on the move—back to Pittsburgh for the last time. Soon after their return, Ann started her doctorate program in education at the University of Pittsburgh (completed in 1972, with a dissertation on open classroom environments in early childhood education).

Ann and Bob had three daughters. Meg (Margaret Ellen) and Lis (Elisabeth Baldwin) were born in Pittsburgh, and Kate (Mary Katherine) was born in Princeton. Most of the extended family still lived in central Pennsylvania, so they took their three daughters to visit throughout the year, and when the girls were young they spent summers on a farm near Shade Gap that was owned by I.C. Taylor, Bob's father.

Ann was known as Dr. Taylor to generations of children and their families at the Children's School, where she was the director from its founding in 1968 to 1993. The curriculum immersed the children in activities, stories, and interactions that helped them to develop a deep understanding of content. Above all, children learned by following their curiosity, and teachers were facilitators. The Children's School was an early model of full-day kindergarten and a site for teaching experience as the hub of the Early Childhood Cooperative Teacher Education Program with Chatham College. Ann worked closely with her colleagues at Chatham, notably Lorraine Morgan and Vivien Richman, to develop this successful teacher training program.

The Children's School served as the laboratory school for the CMU Psychology department, headed by John Sandberg. Ann also encouraged collaborations with other departments. In the 1970s, "the turtle" was introduced to the children by the Computer Science department (now the Institute of Robotics). In 1984, early Macintosh computers were introduced into the curriculum at the Children's School, and the teachers developed presentations for education conferences that helped to alleviate fears around the use of computers in the classroom. Ann was thrilled to hear that the Children's School named the digital archives Baldwin.

Beginning in the 1970s, Ann became interested in early childhood education in other cultures and traveled widely, including trips to Scandinavia, the USSR, China, Japan, and the UK, where she developed a decades-long association with at the University of Norwich.

She was active in the National Association of Laboratory Schools; NALS presented her with a lifetime achievement award. She was also a member of Zonta International, which advocates for women's rights and equal access to education for girls and women. Through Zonta she became close friends with CCAC history professor Alice Greller.

With her colleagues at the University of Hawaii, she and her team at CMU participated in the groundbreaking DASH (Developmental Approaches in Science and Health) curriculum development project for K-6, which was funded by the National Science Foundation. (Technology was later added to the curriculum, but the acronym remained the same.) Through her work with DASH, Hawaii became an annual destination for work and play. Her colleagues there, including Leon Burton, Art King, Loretta Krause, and Frank Pottenger, became dear friends. More than 1,400 southwestern Pennsylvania educators participated in DASH professional development workshops. She worked on DASH until 2003 when she retired at the age of 79. Judy Hallinen and Jean Bird at CMU continued to support local DASH schools.

After Bob developed Alzheimer's, he continued living at home for many years, then moved into Woodside Place (Presbyterian Senior Care) in 1997. Ann asked one of Bob's former students, Harry Levine, to design a small house for her old age that was built alongside the family house. Her daughter Kate and family moved into the main house in the spring of 1999, and she lived in the "mini house" until July 2013.

In recent years, Ann had become a well-loved member of the Presbyterian Senior Care community at The Willows in Oakmont, Pennsylvania.

Preceded in death by her husband in 1999; her older brother, Tom Baldwin, of Santa Fe, in 1995; and her older sister, Mary Krepela, of Chandler, Arizona, in 2016; Ann Baldwin Taylor is survived by her younger sister, Martha Cox, of State College, Pennsylvania; children, Margaret Ellen Taylor of Pittsburgh, Elisabeth Baldwin Taylor (Hal Roth) of Providence, and Mary Katherine Taylor Golightly (Tom) of Pittsburgh. Her grandchildren include Katherine Bartlett Brook (Matthew Stevens) of Boston, Taylor McNeal Brook (Jae Cameron) of Victoria, British Columbia, Zachary Taylor Roth and Matthew Angus (Gus) Roth of Providence, Thomas Woodward Golightly (Jillian Tugya) of Pennsauken, New Jersey, and Neal Robert Golightly of Pittsburgh. She leaves three great-grandchildren: Thora Nell Amirault Brook, Victor James Amirault Brook, and Wyatt Taylor Stevens. She always enjoyed the Baldwin and Taylor reunions with the extended family.

A Memorial Service will be held at Waverly Presbyterian Church (590 South Braddock Ave.), to celebrate Ann Baldwin Taylor's life on Saturday, September 16, 2023, at 11:00 am. She will be buried beside her husband in the Shade Gap Presbyterian Church Cemetery. Arrangements entrusted to the **THOMAS L. NIED FUNERAL HOME INC.**, 7441 Washington Street, Swissvale. www.niedfuneralhome.com.

Donations may be made to the Ann Baldwin Taylor Early Childhood Scholarship Fund at the Children's School at Carnegie Mellon University. Donate online (<https://give.cmu.edu/pmtx/giftselect?id=a41f400000e1g7&appeal=A3628>) or send a check to CMU Children's School, at this address: Dr. Sharon Carver, CMU Children's School, 5000 Forbes Ave., MMC17, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

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