

ANN ELIZABETH MCGEENEY HARTY



Ann Elizabeth McGeeney Harty, aged 92, died peacefully Sunday, July 21, at Longwood at Oakmont (PA). Ann was a longtime Pittsburgh resident with her husband James Q. Harty (d. 2014); survivors include their children Michael, Martha (Richard Scheines), Christopher, Patrick (Lea) and Paul (Laurel), Ann's brother Steven McGeeney, nephews and nieces including Susan Haugh and Jane Haugh

Brammer, eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Predeceased by beloved son Mark (1999)

Ann was born January 4, 1932 to Marion (Morse) and John McGeeney of New York City (followed by brother, Steven then sister, Jane). The family lived in Hollis and Manhasset, NY but spent World War II in New London, CT, where John McGeeney helped develop sonar at the Underwater Sound Lab. Ann attended Manhasset High School then Pembroke College in Providence RI (Brown University) where her parents first met c1926. Among her college honors was editing her Class of 1954 yearbook which she persuaded noted children's author Crockett Johnson to illustrate in the style of his classic Harold and The Purple Crayon. She was a devoted alumnae who served the school in many ways including interviewing and encouraging many Brown applicants from Pittsburgh.

After college Ann returned to work in New York where she met a tall cheerful fellow named James Quinn Harty who worked upstate at Corning Glass; they courted all around the town, were soon engaged then married in July 1955. After honeymooning across Europe in a tiny Citroen Deux Chevaux (Ann claimed Jim drove with his head sticking out the sunroof) they set up together in Corning and brought Michael into the world. The next year they moved to Jim's native Philadelphia where Martha and Christopher were born while Jim taught at Wharton and studied law at Penn. Their lives changed again in 1960 when Jim won a Fulbright Scholarship and they headed to Kanazawa, Japan where Ann wore kimonos and learned origami while Jim taught business classes at the university. They made many friends in Japan and developed a deep appreciation of the culture; Michael returned to live there twice.

Back Stateside Jim graduated from law school and the family drove west to Pittsburgh where he'd been hired by Reed Smith Shaw & McClay. Legend has it a very pregnant Ann dropped him off on Grant Street for his first day of work then gunned their kid-filled, trailer-towing station wagon in a wide U-turn and sped off in search of a place called Upper St. Clair. Which she found and where they stayed several years to add Patrick, Mark and Paul, walking the kids down Hays Road on summer days to the massive public pool known as St Clair Beach. Once Ann took Michael down Rt 19 to see Senator John Kennedy campaigning for President and they all watched daily as nearby farms were paved over for South Hills Village. In 1965 they began looking for a larger home which they found in a jewel box borough called Thornburg; they bought a massive (haunted?) old house on Stanford Road and Ann began a decades-long renovation. From there the kids walked two shady blocks to Thornburg's three-room, six-grades school where every kid in town knew every other...real old-school village life. Once all her kids were walking themselves to school, playground or pool, Ann set out to help the world. Her first project was at Chatham College where she helped start and run JAS (Job Advisory Service), a then-radical entity set up to assist women in reentering the workforce. There she joined forces with Betsy Suatoni from Upper Thornburg who became her lifelong neighbor and friend despite living in Upper Thornburg. The move to Thornburg expanded Ann's Pittsburgh life and led to broader adventures including Peace Links, UN programs for women, cultural exchanges with Russia, China and other Cold War "enemies", and even riding a Peace Train across Eur-Asia. She knew passports are for passing through ports to other places; one summer she traded houses with a family outside London, another time she bought a car in France, flew over to collect it then toured Europe with teenage sons she'd seen off to ski school or student exchanges in Zermatt or Grenoble. And Thornburg got similar treatment via exchange students from Japan, Belgium, and Mexico who moved in as her own children left to colleges across the country while Jim bargained day and night with various unions and came home to see smiling new faces around their always-welcoming dining table. They both loved it.

After Jim's death, Ann moved for the last time to be with friends at Longwood in Oakmont where she and Jean Thomas and Jane MacLeod continued their out-and-about activities including daily walks, theater and symphony evenings, winter fondue hikes and cross country skiing, and especially their grand New Year's traditions, usually winding up with brunch at the Harty cabin near Ligonier. Summers meant warm seaside months at her family house in Stonington CT where she happily fetched the NYTimes with Christopher's dogs, watched over geese, ducks, egrets and herons, lifeguarded swimming grandkids, swam most days herself (even at 90) and basked in the sun as long as she liked.

By any measure, Ann lived an active and fulfilling life; though bound by tradition, she was eager to evolve. She lived independently, read voraciously, sang and danced every day. She was curious and creative, optimistic and upbeat, passionate, obstinate, sentimental and caring, and deeply connected to her husband, children, family, friends and causes. Her indomitable spirit and joie de vivre are already missed by we who loved her. Friends will be received at **JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS, INC.** (freyvogelfuneralhome.com) 4900 Centre Avenue at Devonshire Street on Friday, August 9 from 4-6 p.m. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, August 10 at The Pittsburgh Golf Club at 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers please consider donating to the Pittsburgh Symphony or City Theater in her name.

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