



Barbara Baker Bird

October 26, 1930 - September 1, 2019

Barbara Bird, one of the pioneer residents of Copperleaf in Estero, Florida (January, 2001), passed away peacefully Sunday, September 1, 2019, in the company of her longtime partner and spouse of more than thirty-eight years, Donna Anderton. She was eighty-eight.

Barbara was born in Peoria, Illinois, October 26, 1930, daughter of Lyman Baker and Betty Ball Baker, and granddaughter of Murray Baker, a founder of Caterpillar Tractor. Her stepfather, the one she called “Daddy,” was George Staub Eggleston.

Barbara was married to her former husband, psychologist Dr. Hugh Robert Bird, for some twenty years. Together had three children, Michael Peter Bird, Timothy Lyman Bird, and Elizabeth Rebecca Bird. As Barbara’s son Tim recently said, “Her family is her legacy.”

Barbara’s life also touched many others besides her family. She was a lifelong peace and social activist for those less fortunate than she. As a vice president of the national Student YWCA, she arranged a groundbreaking biracial campus meeting at Sweet Briar College which became one basis for integrating that college. Later, she was one of a group of alumnae who saved Sweet Briar from bankruptcy and facilitated the path to greater success, stability, and leadership.

In 1953, she visited newly emerging democracies for several months around the world, in India, Thailand, Jordan, and Germany in particular. Her excitement at what she saw and learned influenced her profoundly in her future work. She traveled in ninety countries and worked in thirty.

Barbara was graduated from St. Petersburg High and Sweet Briar College. She studied at the University of Washington for a year, then transferred to Columbia University, where she earned a Master's Degree in social work. With her husband Bob Bird, Barbara developed a program in India for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Quaker organization which gave a prototype to the US Peace Corps for its rural development work. Travelling independently and extensively, she located two-year rural residential placement opportunities for college graduate young people, supported and supervised their work in the field.

After the Birds' daughter, her youngest child Beth entered school, Barbara developed a program for special needs children in Philadelphia which enabled them to perform successfully in a classroom setting at Parkway Day School.

Barbara was a founder of the residential shelter Women Against Abuse in Philadelphia for battered women and their children. She established a school and children's program on the premises for those children, which she then directed successfully. Ultimately she became Director of the entire shelter, which is among the oldest such continuing facilities in the United States.

Barbara later directed Welcome House, a program founded and developed by the renowned author Pearl Buck. During her tenure Barbara and her staff brought more than one hundred special needs infants to the United States to find them health care, new families, and "forever homes."

Later Barbara joined with her partner Donna Anderton as co-director of

AFSC's international affairs program in Asia from 1989 to 1995. In that capacity they traveled extensively in Southeast and South Asia to meet a huge variety of individuals to help them facilitate small off-the-record meetings and seminars in broad areas the participants identified as critically unmet needs in their region. Among these were the return of social work (which Mao Tse Tung had banished in 1949) to China; an international network mobilized against the practice of torture; and a variety of initiatives to address serious conflicts in the region.

Throughout most of her adult life, Barbara and her family have owned an old farm outside the village of Wallingford, Vermont which has long served as a second home. Peaceful and serene, with pastures, woods, creek, even a waterfall close to the main farmhouse, the property has been a retreat, an adventure, a family gathering spot, and home away from home.

Generations of families have built treasured memories there, and many have since brought their young children to experience what they had previously. Barbara was an avid gardener, birdwatcher, former skier and scuba diver. She belonged to a women's group she co-founded in 1969, which continues today. Until recently, she was a bocce player. She read voraciously and played cards joyfully on Friday afternoons. She was the chair for a number of years of her regular reading group in Copperleaf, a volunteer reading tutor at Pinewood Elementary School, and a member of the Board of Directors of the American Friends Service Committee as well as Germantown Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. She enjoyed entertaining and cooking. A friend of Barbara's said she was "one of the kindest, most loving, sweetest, and smartest people I've ever met." She will be missed.

Barbara was preceded in death by her parents and her son Michael Peter Bird.

Barbara is survived by her son Timothy Lyman Bird, his wife Rebecca MacDonald, Rebecca's mother Judith MacDonald and granddaughter Siena Rose MacDonald Bird of Brooklyn; her daughter Elizabeth Rebecca Bird, her wife Betti-Sue Hertz, and their son, grandson Mateus of San Francisco; granddaughter Grace Elizabeth Stanton Bird; brother Dudley Eggleston, her niece Blair D'Allessandro, her husband Carl D'Allessandro, their son and daughter Alan and Isabella their nephew John Bird, his wife Patricia, and their sons Aaron, his wife Cindy, and their children Meghan and Logan; son Jeffrey and his wife Kristin; nephew Tom Bird, his wife Cindy, son John and his wife Sara and their children; their son Justin, his wife Mariah, and their children; and their son Matt, his wife Erika, and their children.

Barbara is also survived by her spouse Donna Anderton.

A memorial service will celebrate the life of Barbara Bird on October 26, 2019, at 2 PM at Germantown Meeting of Friends, 44 West Coulter Street, Philadelphia, PA. All are welcome.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be sent to the American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 or to Hope Hospice, 27200 Imperial Street, Bonita Springs, FL 34135.

“Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy: they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.” Marcel Proust

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT **26**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Germantown Meeting of Friends
44 West Coulter Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Tribute Wall



“ *She was a sweet, lovely lady. I didnt get to know her well, but her light shone through. She was special. Signed Leigh Perry*

Jacquelyn Perry - October 08, 2024 at 12:12 PM



“ *Barbara Baker Bird*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *Tricia Anna Furlow lit a candle in memory of Barbara Baker Bird*



Tricia Anna Furlow - October 12, 2019 at 02:51 AM



“ *I am so sorry I just heard tonight at church children for your loss of your beautiful mother ,she was so loved by so many and greatful to have been a sister in Christ she will be missed by so many of us we love her smile and cherrfull heart I know the greiving I have been there with my mother The Lord will grant mercy and Grace on the family your in my prayers keep looking up your mother can be in your dreams is a promise there will be a message from heaven almighty ,Tricia Anna furlow God bless the family shalom*

Tricia Anna furlow - October 12, 2019 at 02:35 AM

DS

“ *Very sorry to hear this news about Barbara. Thinking of you Donna at this time and your whole family.*
Diane Shandor



Diane Shandor - September 10, 2019 at 01:32 PM

LB

Barbara was one of the loveliest women I know. She will be seriously missed. My sympathies always to Donna and the rest of her family. My late husband once said "Don't ever underestimate that woman... She is so smart." And I agree. LJ Bury

LJ Bury - October 08, 2019 at 06:34 PM