



Mary Ellen Chabot

June 25, 1943 - April 12, 2021

Mary Ellen Hilden Chabot, 77, a retired collectibles entrepreneur who also showered her family, friends and neighbors with her gourmet meals and dessert confections, died April 12 in Bonita Springs, FL after a sudden six-week fight against cancer.

She was born in Vallejo, CA on June 25, 1943, where her father worked in the shipyards, building submarines for the World War II fleet. She graduated from high school in Wabeno, WI in 1961 and from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in 1965, and worked as a social worker in Ontonagon, MI, where her parents, the late Arnold and Dolores Hilden, resided.

It was there that she met and married Dan Chabot, a journalist who later joined the staff of The Milwaukee Journal and eventually became editor of its legendary Green Sheet section.

For many years Mary Ellen owned and operated a thriving collectibles shop in Thiensville, a Milwaukee suburb. Starting with \$200 in merchandise, she ran a mail order business out of her home for a time, a business called Beauchene's Limited Editions and Christmas Shop, which eventually expanded into retail space and grew into an enterprise exceeding \$1 million in annual sales.

She had an unerring eye for fine collectibles and art, and often spotted emerging artists and trends long before they became public favorites. Among her many such discoveries were Dept. 56 Christmas villages and Christopher Radko's hand-blown Christmas ornaments.

Her personal touch with customers was legendary. She often wrote two- and

three-page heartfelt letters to mail-order customers. Many of them, as well as visitors to her store, became close, lifelong friends. It was not uncommon for entire far-flung families and groups of friends to buy from her and join her long line of admirers.

But she always claimed her greatest joy and biggest accomplishment was her family, and in creating a home filled with love, laughter, happiness and peace.

"In our house, every day was like Christmas" remembers one of her sons.

She loved spending time with her family, doting on their accomplishments, rejoicing in the company of her grandchildren. She made pies and cakes with Carson and Easton, immersed herself in shopping trips with Lafayette and Troy, admired the athletic skills of Noah and Wyatt.

She was a free spirit and a world traveler who cherished every trip, yet was always happy to return home to the Midwest small-town values of her childhood. One of her many friends described her as a constant ray of summer sunshine, brimming confidence and bright optimism.

When Mary Ellen and Dan retired to Bonita Bay, in Bonita Springs, FL, in 2004, she set about cultivating a new round of friends and admirers through her involvement in community activities. In Bonita Bay she was known to prepare entire gourmet meals for stricken friends and their families, and from her kitchen, concoct spontaneous savory confections for friends and neighbors.

The move to Florida also gave her another opportunity to apply her exquisite taste in colors, fashion, fabrics and interior decorating to her new quarters.

She is survived by her husband, Dan; three sons, Gregory (Sally) of Bainbridge Island, WA, Christian (Angela) of Seattle, and Brett (Dawn) of Singapore; a sister, Christine (Bernie) Gregorich of Ontonagon; two brothers, Thomas (Bonnie) Hilden of Green Bay, WI and John (Carolyn) Hilden of Marquette, MI; and six grandchildren: Lafayette and Wyatt of Bainbridge Island, Noah and Troy of Seattle, and Carson and Easton of Singapore, plus numerous cousins.

A funeral Mass will be held on Thursday, April 22 at 1 p.m. at St. Leo Catholic

Church in Bonita Springs.

The remains are to be cremated. At her request, her ashes are to be spread one day in Yosemite National Park in California, a place she and Dan loved and visited often.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Mary Ellen's name to the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation, online at www.cholangiocarcinoma.org/chabot or by mail to CCF, 5526 West 13400 South, #510, Herriman, Utah 84096.

To sign Mary Ellen's guest register or to leave online condolences, please visit www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home Family Owned and Operated Since 1978.

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

APR **22**. 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Leo the Great Catholic Church
28290 Beaumont Road
Bonita Springs, FL 34134

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Ellen Chabot*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *Dated MaryEllen In Oshkosh when Gary Johnson (a classmate) introduced us. She was a beautiful and intelligent girl, and, at age 80, I still remember her fondly. Rest In Peace MaryEllen. Al Berndt. Pasadena, California*



Al Berndt - November 04, 2021 at 09:18 PM



“ *Dan, our deepest condolences to you and your family- Mary Ellen was so thoughtful and kind to us during our stay in Bonita a few years ago- as were you. Such a lovely and talented couple - Mary Ellen had a light and graciousness to aspire to. Holding you and yours in the light. Hank & Blake (the Beckhoff- Redbone family)*

Blake & Hank Beckhoff - May 12, 2021 at 09:57 PM



“ *Dan, Christian, Gregg and Brett. Alison and I are sorry we aren't there with you in person, but we are with you all in spirit. You have all of our love and support. - Mike and Alison*

Mike Ridgeman - April 22, 2021 at 07:58 PM

LF

“ Love, The Cordiner Family purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Mary Ellen Chabot.



Love, The Cordiner Family - April 21, 2021 at 09:16 PM

IR

“ Dear Brett and Dawn, I am so sorry to learn of the loss of your mother. I truly believe losing a mother is one of life's greatest sorrows. Please know you have my heartfelt sympathy. Irene Ridgeman.

Irene Ridgeman - April 21, 2021 at 11:29 AM

LM

“ Dear Dan and Chabot Family,
We are so sorry to hear of Mary Ellen's passing! May all these pictures of Happy Memories help sustain you during these difficult times!
Hugs, Linda Miller RDH
DR. Alvarez and staff

Linda Miller - April 19, 2021 at 03:21 PM

GC

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 05:39 PM

WB

I have on my calendar an annual reminder of the passing of this lovely woman and today realized, with annoyance, embarrassment, and "good grief" eye-rolling, that I had somehow forgotten to post my own tribute. So here goes:

I came to know her and Dan through Gregg when their family visited Los Angeles in 1985 and stopped by to see Dan's nephew, i.e. my best friend/roomy. Liked her from the start - as I did all of them - and forgive the cliché but it exists for a reason: What's not to like?

Gregg moved to LA in 1991 and lived next door so we became fast friends. Over the years I would be invited to gatherings where Dan and Mary Ellen were present, and I'm happy to state that they liked me as well. (Either that or both wielded Streep-like acting ability.)

I once asked Dan about the first time he laid eyes on Mary Ellen. He vividly recalled the moment, and it was not only what he said but - again, cliché alert - the way he said it. Eyes smiling, he said that when she walked into the room it was as if the clouds had opened up and beams of sunshine cascaded downward in wondrous "You'll never forget this, will you?" splendor.

So as an "objective observer" of this, yes, truly wonderful woman, allow me to say that I completely believe Dan's memory of that day. May we all be so fondly recalled.

Inveterate bachelor as I am, I can't imagine the heartache of losing a wife of half a century. As for the three sons, I too know the bottomless hurt of the loss of the one who put you on the planet. I can only hope that the wondrous collage of memories of this warm and radiant wife and mother somehow keep the more stubborn stabs of the pain of her loss forever at bay.

(NOTE: As I was writing this, I was listening to randomly played tunes and, just before I hit SHARE "Don't Get Me Wrong" by The Pretenders played. The song has my all-time favorite romantic lyric: "Don't get me wrong if I'm acting so distracted. I'm thinking about the fireworks that go off when you smile." How perfectly fitting.)

*William P. Bekkala
4/12/2023*

William P. Bekkala - April 12, 2023 at 12:38 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 04:17 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 12:21 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 12:09 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 12:07 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 12:03 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 12:02 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:59 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:51 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:47 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:45 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:42 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:41 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:40 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:39 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:33 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:31 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:30 AM

KI

I think this is my favorite.....she looks absolutely stunning.

kitty - April 17, 2021 at 08:22 PM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:28 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:23 AM

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Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 11:20 AM

GC

“ 1 file added to the album Mary Ellen



Gregg Chabot - April 17, 2021 at 10:54 AM

KI

Oh my goodness, these photos are wonderful. I hope they stay up forever so I can keep coming back to look at them. What happy family memories. Kitty

Kitty - April 17, 2021 at 01:41 PM

KI

“ *She drew you in like a magnet, even when we were kids. She was a determined person and seemed to me, even as a teenager, that she knew the kind of life she wanted and she set out to achieve it. I always admired her for that. I loved her laugh and that smile. We've lost one of the special ones. Kitty Enders*

Kitty - April 16, 2021 at 01:49 PM

SB

I knew Mary Ellen through Water Aerobics at Bonita Bay. She was a dynamic person with a beautiful smile. Our entire group loved her. She will be greatly missed. Sally Barnes

Sally Barnes - April 17, 2021 at 07:38 AM

KE

Thank you Gregg for sharing these photos. I just loved looking at all of them and I hope they can stay up forever. Kitty Enders

Kitty Enders - April 17, 2021 at 02:11 PM

KF

Thank you for sharing these memories of a beautiful life. Mary Ellen's smile radiates her love of family and life. She will be missed by all whose life she touched. Sending long distance hugs and prayers.
Kay Falcus (UWO friend)

Kay Falcus - April 18, 2021 at 10:29 AM

GK

My sympathy to the entire family. Nice to see her beautiful pictures of Mary Ellen as an adult. I only remember her as a child. Gloria Harter Konkel.

Gloria Harter Konkel - April 18, 2021 at 12:28 PM