



Barbara M. Cook

April 6, 1942 - December 12, 2025

Barbara McFaul Cook died on December 12, 2025, in Easton, Maryland at the age of 83.

Barbara was born in Washington D.C. on April 6, 1942, to Harry Algire McFaul (Mac) and Ada Charlotte McFaul (Charlotte). She grew up in Takoma Park, Maryland, attending Rolling Terrace Elementary before graduating from Montgomery Blair High School in 1960.

The oldest of three daughters, Barbara inherited her mathematician mother's quiet determination and consummate planning skills. Even as a child she always had a Plan B and a Plan C, just in case they were needed. When her family went sailing (a favorite pastime of her father's), she was always the one watching the weather report and planning alternate routes. After high school, Barbara attended Colby College, where she studied History. Upon graduation in 1964, she moved back to Washington and worked for the federal government for a few years.

In September 1967, she married William Landy Cook III in Annapolis. Together they built a good life, moving to Columbia, Maryland in 1968, just as the new town was being built.

In the Fall of 1975, she followed in the footsteps of her father and grandfather

(both Maryland-barred attorneys) and enrolled at the University of Maryland School of Law at night, balancing her studies with caring for three young children.

Barbara graduated first in her law school class in 1979, winning numerous awards: the William Strobel Thomas Prize for the highest scholastic average; the William P. Cunningham Award for exceptional achievement and service to the School of Law; the Order of the Coif; and the Judge Morton P. Fisher Memorial Prize for best work in estate and gift taxation.

In May 1979, she was hired as an Assistant County Solicitor for Howard County, Maryland. In 1983, she became Senior Assistant County Solicitor, a position she held until she resigned to enter private practice in 1986.

Within a year, Barbara was appointed the first full-time County Solicitor for Howard County. She was also the first female county attorney in Maryland, and held the position for an unprecedented 20 years. She was built for the job. She loved solving problems, and finding a solution that worked for the greatest common good. You were very unlikely to win a negotiation with Mom. She was patient, fair, and rational - but also indefatigably determined. She would think a problem through from beginning to end, and then start all over again to make sure she hadn't missed anything.

If you met her, she would mention none of these accomplishments, and instead would probably want you to talk about yourself for a while.

Following her retirement in 2007, Barbara and Will spent part of their time on the Eastern Shore, splitting their days between Easton/Royal Oak and Columbia. But most of all, they pursued Barbara's lifelong love of travel - to Europe, to Africa, to the Middle East, on river boats closer to home and abroad, and to the wilds of Alaska. Will died before her in November 2021,

after 54 years of marriage.

Barbara will be dearly missed by her children Jen Mason (Jason), Landy Cook (Megan), and Susan Cook (Chris Lee); grandchildren Will Cook, Zach Mason, Charlotte Cook, Alexandra Mason, Ben Cook, Claire Lee, and Maddie Lee; and sisters Ellen Swierk (Tom) and Mary Ann Bonos (Tom).

There will be a memorial service for friends and family on January 4 at noon at Historic Oakland Manor in Columbia. Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to an organization of your choice. Some options she might have suggested would be Colby College (<https://www.colby.edu>), Adkins Arboretum (https://www.adkinsarboretum.org/support_the_arboretum/ways_to_give.html/title/arboretum-tribute-program), or the Talbot Historical Society (<https://talbothistory.org/support/join-donate/>)

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 4. 12:00 PM (est)

Historic Oakland Manor
5430 Vantage Point Road,
Columbia, MD 21044
<https://www.historic-oakland.com/>

Tribute Wall

PM

“ Philip M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara M. Cook.

Philip M. - January 07 at 05:39 AM

SU

“ I have the fondest memories of being neighbors with the Cooks!!! Barbara was so warm, inviting and conversational - always asking how things are going, how's school, college, work, etc...it was always fun to hang out in the kitchen and be part of the loving, hectic (in a good way) life of 3 kiddos schedules, meals and conversations. So many holidays, vacations, dinners, and just day to day life raking leaves, planting in the garden, playing ball and chats at the mailbox or front lawns! I can hear her voice, her laugh and feel her contagious warmth. Both your parents hold such a special place in my heart and I know they do yours. Thinking of you all Susan, Landy, Jenny and the entire family! Much love, Susan

Susan - January 04 at 08:21 AM

BC

“ As one of the “oldest cousins” I always felt a bonding with your mom! My father was the brother of your grandmother. So your mom, Margie and I were the 3 oldest “musketees “! My memories of your mom and dad include their visits to Florida. They would come to see Aunt June and Uncle Ernie. We all lived in Port St Lucie so we had many enjoyable times together. Your mom was so very humble and always more interested in our lives than telling about hers! She took such wonderful care of your dad and seemed to keep him going right to the end. I missed speaking with her these last few months but the last time i spoke to her she was missing your dad so much! Now they are together even though we miss them here with us. God bless you as you grieve....our prayers are with you! I’m so sorry we will not be with you on Sunday! If someone takes a video of the service I would love to see it! Love, Bonnie Carl

bonnie carl - January 03 at 05:15 PM

JG

“ We were lucky enough to share many adventures with Barbara and Will and our friends Dominique and Paul Butcher. The first picture is from 2017 and the second is from 2012 both taken in Royal Oak. The third picture is from 2011. And was taken in Costa Rica where we had a wonderful tour adventure together. Barbara and Will will truly be missed.



Joseph Gentile - January 03 at 04:48 PM

MD

“ We've been thinking a lot about your mom and dad, grandmother and grandfather these past few weeks. We have so many good memories and know that you do too. I first met your mother shortly after she was born and when I was about 3 months old. As you know, our mothers were sisters! Our families got together at least twice a year; once at my family home in Rochester (at Canandagua Lake near Rochester) and once in Maryland at the spring school break. We had so much fun each time, and eventually saw "everything" in Washington DC there was to see. And we loved the cottage on the lake and all the fun we had there. The cottage is still there and as of a few years it looked just the same as it did when we were there many years ago.

Barbara and I have kept in touch thru the years and all those years have brought- schooling, summer camps, weddings, births, ups and downs, deaths and all else that a life might bring. I am so grateful for each of these events and will miss your Mom and Dad, but also will enjoy the memories, the laughs, the cries etc.

Bill and I know that you also have lots and lots of memories, and like us will enjoy talking about them, laughing about them and thinking back over the years.

Bill and I are so sad that we cannot be at the remembrance for Barbara, but will be there with all of you in spirit

Love, Marge and Bill Douglass

Marge Douglass - January 02 at 06:20 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Barbara M. Cook.*



January 02 at 12:24 PM



“ *Shirley Crawford & Susannah Li planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara M. Cook.*

Shirley Crawford & Susannah Li - January 01 at 09:00 PM



“ *Lisa and Bill O'Brien purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Barbara M. Cook.*



Lisa and Bill O'Brien - December 31, 2025 at 10:09 AM



“ *Lisa and Bill O'Brien planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara M. Cook.*

Lisa and Bill O'Brien - December 31, 2025 at 10:09 AM