



Mary Dougherty Wood

December 8, 1918 - October 18, 2017

Mary Dougherty Wood died peacefully on October 18, 2017, at her home in Chestertown, MD.

She was born on December 8, 1918, in Wyncote, PA, to Graham Dougherty and Maria Newbold Dougherty and moved in 1932 to Berryville, VA, with her parents, her sister, and her two brothers.

She lived in New York City as a young woman and attended Barnard College. During World War II, she lived in Washington, DC, and worked for the Red Cross. She was married to Howard Wood in 1942, and the couple settled on Indiantown Farm near Centreville, MD, where they lived until 1996 when they moved to Chestertown. The Woods lived, worked, travelled, and sailed together until Howard's death in 2008.

Over the years, Mary played an active role in improving the lives of Eastern Shore residents. She worked with the local Red Cross and PTA and helped start a daycare center, a medical center, and the Spaniard's Neck Foundation for affordable housing in Queen Anne's County. She also drove the bookmobile in Talbot County. A poet and playwright, she participated in the Maryland Arts Council's Poets-in-the-Schools Program.

She was instrumental in rescuing the Church Hill Theatre and turning it into a

thriving cultural force in the county and in bringing the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra to the Eastern Shore for the Mid-Shore Symphony concert series. She was also a founder of the Kent Association for Riding Therapy (KART).

She served on the Maryland Advisory Committee of the US Civil Rights Commission and was active in the NAACP. In 2015, she became a founding member of the Kent-Queen Anne's Affiliate of the Maryland Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1968 from Washington College, Chestertown, and later served on the Board of Visitors and Governors of the College. She helped establish the Rose O'Neill Literary House there, which includes a room dedicated to her. She worked with the Literary House to create the Mary Wood Fellowship, awarded in even-numbered years to a female-identifying writer in poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction who has published at least one book.

Her children's book "The Magic Mystery Swan" was published in 1974 and received the Easton Academy of Arts prize. She received the University of Indiana's Elizabeth Enright Memorial Award for her short novel, "Eclipse." These works were followed over the years by two volumes of poetry, a book of essays, and one of short stories. Several of her plays were produced, including "Crossing the Gulf Stream," "1787," "Remarkable Recovery," and "Hunting Rights." She also published a set of four books about her grandmothers and her husband's grandmothers, based on letters and historical research. The most successful was "My Darling Alice," which evokes Eastern Shore life during the civil war and the depression.

Mary is survived by her children, Robin Wood (Susan), Emory W. Disney (Loren), James D. Wood (JoAnn); her grandchildren, Maria D. Wood, Adams J. Wood, Helen A. Wood, Olivia M. Wood, Julia M. Wood, and Laura M.

Wood; two great-grandchildren, Phebe L. Wood and Winter C. Wood; and a brother, Frazer L.W. Dougherty. She was preceded in death by Howard Wood, her husband of 66 years; a brother, Graham Dougherty; a sister, Gertrude Watkins; and a beloved grandson, Miles H. Disney.

Mary had the gift of staying in touch with her extended family and a large network of friends. An inveterate letter-writer, she was an early adopter of word processing and email, which she used until the last days of her life. She touched many lives and will be greatly missed.

All are welcome to attend an open house in celebration of Mary's life at the Rose O'Neill Literary House, Washington College, 407 Washington Ave., Chestertown, from 5-8 p.m. on Saturday, November 4 and a memorial service at 2 p.m. on Sunday, November 5, at the Presbyterian Church of Chestertown, 905 Gateway Dr., Chestertown.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Church Hill Theatre or Kent Association for Riding Therapy (KART).

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

NOV 4. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rose O'Neill Literary House, Washington College
407 Washington Avenue
Chestertown, MD 21620

Memorial Service

NOV 5. 2:00 PM (ET)

Presbyterian Church of Chestertown
905 Gateway Drive
Chestertown, MD

Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Dougherty Wood*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Mary Dougherty Wood*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Mary Dougherty Wood*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM

AM

“ To all the family of dear Mary Wood, our heartfelt sympathies.

Mary found me when I was a mother of young children. She pulled me and my husband, Campbell, into the worthiest of projects with her persistent persuasion. For a decade we all worked together, first saving the building and then creating the organization of the Church Hill Theatre, which is alive and well today as a functioning theatre. During those years, Mary also shared with me her passion for writing. further, she inspired me to return to my own love of both writing and family genealogy, giving me a copy of her My Darling Alice.

Her expansive interests in so many things coupled with her powerful energy were a real tonic to me, a new arrival to the Eastern Shore. Eventually, we moved south toward Easton and Howard and Mary moved north to Chestertown. Life took us in different directions. Yet, I was always glad when we would see each other at lectures or classes, and so pleased to receive her postcards announcing the publication of a new work. Her strength of character, her vital energy for life will remain with me always.

Love and peace to you, Mary, where ever you are!

Aprille McKee-Wright

Aprille McKee-Wright - December 10, 2017 at 10:25 AM

TG

“ Please accept my family's heartfelt condolences on the loss of your dear loved one. May you find comfort and peace in the fond memories of them, and The Almighty God's promise to restore those asleep in death, to perfect life on a paradise Earth, as written in The Bible for our comfort.

The Greene's - October 29, 2017 at 10:26 PM

TJ

“ Tom And Nancy Lee Jewell lit a candle in memory of Mary Dougherty Wood



Tom and Nancy Lee Jewell - October 26, 2017 at 06:51 PM

CC

“ Chestertown Cardiology lit a candle in memory of Mary Dougherty Wood



Chestertown Cardiology - October 26, 2017 at 01:05 PM

CC

We are very sorry for your loss. Mrs. Wood was one of our favorite patient. Cherish all the memories she has left behind.

Chestertown Cardiology - October 26, 2017 at 01:09 PM

RW

Thank you for taking care of my mother over the years.

Robin Wood - October 28, 2017 at 08:58 AM

LC

“ Lynda Palmatary, Centreville sent a virtual gift in memory of Mary Dougherty Wood



Lynda Palmatary, Centreville - October 25, 2017 at 11:41 AM

LC

It was always a pleasure talking with Mrs. Wood and her love for life was awesome. She and Mr. Wood were wonderful citizens of the Centreville area when they lived here and it was always a pleasure to see both of them. There are many memories of her that will be carried in many people's lives forever. Prayers and blessings to your family at this time. RIP Ms. Mary. God Bless, Lynda H. Palmatary, Centreville.

Lynda Palmatary, Centreville - October 25, 2017 at 11:43 AM

RW

Thank you, Lynda, so much for those kind words. They fill me with gratitude that my parents decided to make their lives in Queen Anne's, and later, Kent County. They were all about being good citizens, and I believe they thrived because they were appreciated by people like you. God bless you.

Robin Wood - October 26, 2017 at 07:03 AM

MR

“*Maryann Ruehrmund lit a candle in memory of Mary Dougherty Wood*



Maryann Ruehrmund - October 25, 2017 at 03:58 AM

JW

Thank you. We are grateful for your remembrance and her long and full life.

James, and on behalf of our family

James Wood - October 25, 2017 at 09:18 AM

CB

“ *Chestertown has lost one of its genuine treasures. Our family had the great good fortune to have Mary Wood as a next-door neighbor in her final years. She was always friendly, generous, and welcoming, inviting us for dinner or drinks and for conversation that was always lively. Despite her years, she did not lose her sharpness of mind or her wit. Reminiscences were an endless source of entertainment. We send our sincere and heartfelt condolences to Mary's family and share in their sorrow.*

Clayton and Maria Black - October 24, 2017 at 04:06 PM

JW

Clayton & Masha,

Thank you for your heartfelt uplifting words and being wonderful neighbors. Please know she very much enjoyed and appreciated the cards, chocolates and many kindnesses you gave her over the years.

The intertwining of our lives from ballet classes for young girls, Washington College events, shoveling snow, setting out the trash, taking time to chat all add up to such beautiful unplanned connections.

With love and gratitude, James & our entire family

James Wood - October 25, 2017 at 09:48 AM

CK

“ *My condolences to Mrs. Wood's family, who were all a special part of my life for many years. She was, by far, one of the most interesting women I ever knew. I enjoyed typing her manuscripts and being one of the first people to read them. i feel blessed to have known her. What a long beautiful life.*

Cathy Kerchner

Cathy Kerchner - October 19, 2017 at 09:55 AM

JW

Cathy,

Thank you for typing those manuscripts and oh so many other things over the years. My parents loved you and were so lucky when you came into their lives and said so many, many times.

I parked outside your office last Thursday and almost came in to share the news, and regret not doing so, before heading to the bank where we often meet anyway.

Thank you for your kind words and countless small town kindnesses. We all are so lucky.

With love and gratitude, James & our entire family

James Wood - October 25, 2017 at 09:31 AM

MW

For me, too, Mary Wood was one of the most interesting women I've known. She leaves the world a better place but she also leaves behind those who will miss her quiet strength of character, warmth, wit and wisdom.

The Woods, Howard and Mary, were old friends of my in-laws, Charles and Anne West. Mary signed up for painting classes with Charlie when, as an award-winning artist, he came back to his home town in 1946. He brought, she said, a touch of "La Vie Boheme" to Centreville. Years later, when the Wests learned that Tommy was to be posted to London (what luck) as an Air Force medic during the Vietnam War they reached out to the English family that the Woods had taken in as evacuees in World War Two. The Lavender family in turn warmly welcomed Tom, we met through this connection and in time we were married. In the years since the Woods were part of our Centreville lives: at Ben's christening, at Anne's 90th, at West Gallery events or talks. We have all Mary's books, some letters and poems written for special occasions and most precious of all, great memories.

We hope to continue and strengthen ties in the years ahead with all the Wood family.

Margaret and Tom West, Washington, D.C.

margaret west - November 01, 2017 at 11:04 AM