



Martha Hannam Brookes

January 9, 1932 - February 20, 2014

Martha Brookes, longtime resident of Corvallis, died Thursday morning.

Martha was born in Urbana, Ill., in 1932. Her parents, Alfred and Dorothy, both were geologists. Growing up with scientists gave her and her siblings a great love of science.

She was a proud graduate of Uni High in Urbana, which, she was quick to remind us, produced three Nobel laureates. After high school she spent one year at Beloit College. She went on to graduate from the University of Illinois with a degree in botany. She spent two years in Hawaii doing graduate studies but then completed a master's degree in botany at the University of Illinois.

In 1954 she married Victor Brookes. Victor received a post-doctoral position at Oregon State University, which prompted her move to Corvallis in 1955. After raising four children, Martha returned to work as a technical publications editor in the Department of Forestry at OSU. In 1975 she and Victor took the family to the Netherlands for a year for Victor's sabbatical. Martha loved her year in Europe, traveling whenever she could, including visits to other OSU families on sabbatical.

When the family returned, Martha continued her career as an editor, taking a position with the U.S. Forest Service. Martha brought her love of science and

her love of language together and made quite a name for herself teaching scientists to write clearly. Even after retiring at age 70, she continued her work by teaching science writing at the university and freelancing for old friends.

Martha cared deeply about the world. She campaigned against war and donated generously to environmental and civil rights causes, and was a longtime member of the League of Women Voters.

Martha loved music. She had very eclectic tastes and loved live music. She attended the opera regularly in Portland, the symphony in Corvallis and the Grateful Dead anytime they were nearby. Martha loved to sing. She would sing along to music on the stereo, and to her kids and grandchildren. She even joined a group to sing Mozart's Requiem, spending many evenings away for the long practices. Toward the end, as her memory started to fade, she still remembered song lyrics.

Martha loved to cook and entertain. She passed that love of cooking and food on to her children and grandchildren. Many will remember Martha by the food that she prepared for her family, for parties and for her students.

Martha is survived by her brother, Ross; sister Enid; four children, Richard, Allen, Mary and Tom; and six grandchildren, Harrison, Margaret, Zoe, Alexander, Jackson and Leo.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Victor.

Martha's family will host a celebration of her life at an open house beginning at 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28, at 1851 N.W. Jameson Place.

Memorial donations may be made to the Vina Moses Center.

Tribute Wall

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“ My deepest sympathy to all in your family for the loss you have suffered. May you find comfort in your family, friends and the future promises in God's word. He has promised to end death forever and reunite us with our dear loved ones (Rev 21:4 & John 5:28, 29) May you continue to remember the fond memories of your loved one

D'Anita - March 27, 2014 at 06:54 AM