

Ann Patterson Munro

April 1, 1933 ~ September 22, 2025

Ann Patterson Munro died peacefully at home on Saturday, September 22, 2025, at the age of 92. Born April 1,1933, to George D Patterson and Marvel Maples, she grew up in Detroit, Michigan, and spent many wonderful summers at the beach in Michigan, with her family, and her close relatives, the Hollowells. She attended Wellesley College ('54) where she was highly regarded and achieved the role of Chief Justice of the Student Supreme Court. After graduating, she moved to Washington DC, to work at the NSA, where she met the love of her life, Donald J Munro, who was at the time a Lt.j.g. in the US Navy stationed in the Phillipines. They were married in Manila on March 3, 1956, and so began 67 years of adventures together both at home and around the world. She completed a masters degree in African studies at Columbia University, and in the 50's, 60's and 70's spent extended time with Don in Taiwan and Hong Kong, where Ann learned Chinese, and then in China. They explored Cambodia and Vietnam and other far flung places together. She was a fearless traveller and made a point of living in the closest connection possible with the people and places she visited. They eventually settled in Ann Arbor, Michigan, at the University of Michigan, where she finished a second masters degree in Public Health and spent a distinguished career in risk management at University of Michigan Hospitals.

She created with Don a life full of love, reading, curiosity about the world, kindness and social activism. Ann was unique. She hated any form of waste or excess and was known throughout her life for her spirited opinions on what could and could not be thrown away. Though she sometimes stayed in the background, and let Don hold the stage, Ann was strong, smart, and powerful. She expressed her values and beliefs through action more than words. She was proud to recount going to her regular tennis game one morning in August, 1968 while 9 months pregnant, and after a few strokes, deciding it was time to turn around and go to the hospital to give birth to their daughter, Sarah.

Ann was a strong advocate for civil and women's rights. She was deeply involved in the Ann Arbor NAACP at the beginning of its work in the 60's and subsequently with the Ann Arbor Community Center, Food Gatherers and Planned Parenthood, among many others. To the dismay of Nimbys around her, she advocated fearlessly for affordable housing construction in the upper middle class university neighborhood where they lived. She organized neighborhood cleanups to bring the community around their house on Ridgeway Street together. She remembered birthdays and kept up friendships from throughout her life over decades and decades of time and distance. She was, as anyone who knew her would tell you, an avid and competitive tennis player and she continued playing in national level tournaments well into her 80s. One of the biggest adventures for Ann was building a log cabin from scratch with Don in Leelanau County Michigan. The many friends, relatives and neighbors who were part of that beautiful creation remember her walking around the property with a hammer or a router in hand ready to get up on the roof or hoist beams or whatever the day's tasks involved.

She was far ahead of her time in her understanding of her own capabilities, of relationships between people of different backgrounds, and her vision for the world. She made the world a better place in so many ways.

In 2019 she and Don, in their late 80s, moved to Salt Lake City, Utah to live across the street from Sarah. It was an enormous sacrifice to leave their Ann Arbor house of 50 years and their friends and beloved community, but in return they got a beautiful six years close to their daughter and her family, the beautiful mountains and sunny skies, which Ann enjoyed from their porch until the very end. One of her many joys in these years was an almost daily card game with Sarah‘s mother-in-law, Anna Holzner, which she looked forward to eagerly and gave a rhythm to her days. She leaves behind her loving daughter, Sarah, her son-in-law Claudio, her grandchildren, Powell and Nicolas, her far-flung extended family of cousins, nieces and nephews, and many friends, neighbors and tennis buddies with whom she shared this life. We miss her terribly.