

June Wilkins Nebeker

February 24, 1928 ~ January 3, 2022

June Wilkins Nebeker passed away on the morning of January 3, 2022. Her own words tell the story of her life:

On a crisp and clear February day in 1928, June was born to a proper and studious father, Cleon W. Wilkins and a free-spirited mother, Lucy Andrus Wilkins. It was a happy household, always filled with music, art, conversations about the law, current events and hard work. Eventually, there were four daughters who did everything from painting, to playing the piano to cutting the lawn: Pat, Ann, and Lucy, who have enriched her life continuously. Her brothers-in-law were the best brothers she never had: Bill Cannon, Dick Ellis and Fred Moreton. June's parents built a home close to the University of Utah so that their daughters could be close to the world of ideas June She fell in love with the University at a young age and it continued to nourish her throughout her life.

She attended Douglas, Stewart, Bryant, and East High School. She graduated from the University of Utah in 1949 in Education and later in her life went to graduate school in Art History. She attended Cambridge University in England with five adventurous friends who felt like children again as they learned, played and rode their bikes all over the beautiful countryside. Later she and Gerrie Clayton went back to England to attend the John Brookes School of Garden Design with 11 other students from all over the world.

At 17, she went to work as a waitress at Jenny Lake Ranch. She climbed, swam, and danced to Glenn Miller in Jackson Hole with a bellhop named Steve Nebeker. It was the beginning of a life of adventure that continued for 67 years. They've hunted, skied, played tennis and golf, fished, hiked, gone swimming, driven tractors, and enjoyed a wide array of activities with their children and spouses, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She and Steve are the parents of four children: Jeanne N. Jardine (Jim), Mary Larson (Brent), Stephen W. Nebeker (Holly) and Annie N. Christensen (Gary), 11 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.

June had numerous jobs in her life. She taught third grade at Douglas Elementary School, taught children with disabilities at Fairmont Park, taught Art History at Salt Lake Community College and Garden Design at the U of U. She and Steve taught English through the Kennedy Center at Tongji University in Shanghai, China. She was a founding member of The Women's Resource Center at the U.

She was privileged to do some volunteer work. She was President of the Salt Lake Junior League and Vice President of the U of U Alumni Association. At the U she served on the Advisory Boards of the Colleges of Social Work, and Behavioral Sciences, Fine Arts, Health Sciences, Gardner Hall, KUED and the Bennion Center. She was a delegate from Utah for The Initiative for Families with Ellen Furgis and Esther Landa. She received The Merit of Honor Award from the U and the Legacy of Excellence Award from the Junior League. She and Steve received the Camarata Award from the U's Department of Music.

She was a devoted member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Her favorite assignments were to be the chorister in the Junior Sunday School and sing with those wonderful, funny and rambunctious children; to worship with the single adults and be constantly inspired by their great dedication and faith; to teach the Laurels and watch them grow and change as they became more aware of the needs of others. She always had a humanistic view of religion.

June loved playing tennis, skiing, swimming and even enjoyed the mercurial game of golf. She found delight in watching her grandchildren compete in soccer, basketball, golf, football and swimming. It was a bit problematic when the grandchildren played against one another.

She and her husband climbed up to Machu Picchu, rode camels in Turkey, marveled at the Sistine Chapel, walked through the dachas that bordered the Volga River, and were captivated by the Taj Mahal. However, her favorite places remained her little home on the hill, Snow Canyon in the early spring and their home at North Eden, Bear Lake.

June had a fabulous life full of learning, love, laughter and tears. She regretfully leaves the many people who have enlightened, enhanced, and enabled her to do what she loved: her friends, her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She is now enjoying a glorious reunion with Steve.

There will be a Visitation on Wednesday, January 12 from 6 to 8 pm at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 East 1300 South, Salt Lake City. The Memorial Service will be held at the Hilltop Ward, 589 East 18th Avenue, on Thursday, January 13 at noon. Masks are encouraged.

For those who would like to join the services via Zoom, may do so here: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85678306408

In lieu of flowers June requests that you donate to the University of Utah’s Music Department for scholarships and/or give flowers to someone you love. If interested, please go to music.utah.edu and click on the "Give" tab and fill out the gift fields.