



Lu B. Wenneker

June 12, 1928 - November 3, 2021

Lu Beery Wenneker

Passed away on November 3, 2021 at age 93. A woman of tremendous energy and passion, she was the daughter of Lenore Hughes Beery and Jacob Karl Beery. Lu attended PCW, now Chatham University. She married Jerome S. Wenneker in 1951. In the early days of their marriage she worked in the display department of Gimbels department store by day and acted in plays at the Pittsburgh Playhouse by night. Later, working on her PhD in art history at the University of Pittsburgh, while working full time and raising 3 children, she was awarded a Fulbright Grant to conduct research in Florence, Italy. Thus began her lifelong love of all things Italian. Lu both wrote and rated the AP exam in Art History for many years.

Following a first act spent teaching and raising her family in Pittsburgh, she and Jerry enjoyed a rejuvenating second act in Los Angeles where she taught at Marlborough School for more than 30 years, retiring at age 87. Initially teaching speech and drama, she went on to teach art history and serve as college counselor first at the Ellis School in Pittsburgh and later at Marlborough School. At Ellis, she directed numerous plays, among them half a dozen musicals she scripted and produced with fellow Pittsburgher Joseph Willcox Jenkins. Jerry passed away in 1998 but Lu continued to enjoy living in California until her health brought her back east for her third act in Pittsburgh.

She was an avid gardener, an excellent cook, and a lifelong animal lover. Over the years she adopted dozens of dogs and cats in need of a loving home. She is survived by her three children, six grandchildren, one great-granddaughter, two dogs and two cats. In lieu of flowers may we suggest a contribution to Humane Animal Rescue <https://humaneanimalrescue.org> or the Amanda Foundation (<https://www.amandafoundation.org>).

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Tribute Wall

DK

“ I discovered Dr. Wenneker's brilliant Ph.D. dissertation years ago and told friends interested in Giulio Camillo about her translation and interpretation. This is a monumental work. It transforms our idea of this 16c. cleric-scholar and is insightful at every level. It has meant so much to anyone interested in the art of memory; it has kept us from simplifying the past. Dr. Wenneker grasped the issues of the age, the breadth of Camillo's genius, and the cleverness of his memory theater. She went far beyond other scholarship on Camillo's work, which is hard to imagine for a still-young, ambitious, mother intent on getting her Ph.D. Courage and intelligence never found a happier partnership than in Dr. Wenneker's restoration of Camillo's brilliant ideas. On behalf of all who have benefited from her work, THANK YOU!

Don KUNZE - March 10, 2024 at 08:51 AM



“ Lu B. Wenneker

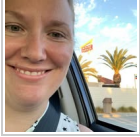
January 13, 2023 at 04:43 PM

LW

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Laura Wenneker - November 18, 2021 at 10:11 AM



“ I came to know and appreciate Dr. Wenneker as a member of her AP course my senior year(2001-2002). I was also lucky enough to work closer with her as an Alumna, in coordinating personally guided visits to Museums around Los Angeles nearly a decade later. Those evenings felt like a real treasure, hearing about her chosen pieces, revisiting with members of the community with like-minded appreciation. Poised, impassioned, and patient, she made learning through art and its expression a continuing pursuit. The ripples she has created for the appreciation of art in Los Angeles and beyond are still growing.

Alexandra Burton - November 17, 2021 at 11:19 PM

ER

“ I, like so many other violets, am an art historian today because of Lu. Her genuine love of art was so palpable in the classroom that it was hard not to find it contagious. While many of us love art because of her passion, we also loved Lu because of her obvious desire to come to know us as individuals as well. I'll never forget the time my friend dragged me up to her at the end of a class and said, "Erica loves Egypt too, ok, bye" and ran off. Lu just gave me a look of intrigue and said, "So you are an Egyptophile too..." That moment was the beginning of many long conversations and shared book recommendations. I will always cherish my memories of her teaching and her friendship.

Erica - November 17, 2021 at 11:35 AM

VL

“ Dr Wenneker sparked my love for Art History, and is probably the driving force behind my decision to ultimately choose that as my major at Amherst--she will be missed, but always very fondly remembered x

Valerie Leipheimer - November 15, 2021 at 09:05 AM

TN

“ If I remember correctly, one of her favorite sculptures was Bernini's *Ecstasy of Santa Theresa*. Dr. Wenneker reached the minds of many students. She prompted us to see, observe, and think. I thank her for instilling a love of art in me. Forever sharp, patient, sophisticated, and thoughtful, she will be remembered warmly. May she rest in the expansive skies of Dutch paintings with their soft clouds and inviting light.

Tracy N - November 11, 2021 at 08:18 PM

KA

“ I have very fond memories of Dr. Wenneker from my years at Marlborough and she instilled in me a love of art and specifically a new love of paintings which up until that time I did not have. I believe the class was realtively new (this was '85 or '86) so not sure if it was AP but I did go on to take an art history class in college (Dutch 17th century paintings) which was one of my favorite courses at NU. She was one classy lady and will be missed.

Katie - November 11, 2021 at 07:52 PM



Alexandra
Bendaña

“ Dr. Wenneker's class changed my world! It was because of her that I started appreciating art and seeing the stories behind the art that taught me about life. Through her teachings it was as if a veil had been lifted and I became passionate about discovering and understanding the way that art related to culture. She will be missed. May she rest in peace!

Alexandra Bendaña - November 11, 2021 at 04:28 PM

MW

“ It’s thanks to Dr Wenneker that I have a career in art — focusing slides for her meant so much more than she could have known! It’s so lovely to read about what a full and interesting life she led, both before and after Marlborough. May we all be so lucky to live so long and touch so many minds.

Madeline Warren - November 11, 2021 at 03:40 PM

KO

“ Dr W and my mother, Daphne Kurchak, were colleagues at Marlborough years ago and very good friends. Dr W also was THE SOLE reason my addled brain could get a 5 on the AP Art Hx exam in the early eighties.....What an amazing woman and teacher. She will hold a very special place in my mind.
Karin Kurchak Olson

Karin Olson - November 11, 2021 at 02:53 PM

SG

“ Dr. Wenneker was my AP Art History teacher in the late 1990s and forever shaped by love, passion, and excitement for art. As I look back at my time at Marlborough her spirit and energy stand out as being one of the most formative during my education.

Sarah Gee - November 11, 2021 at 01:51 PM

IR

“ Dr. Wenneker was my AP art history teacher at Marlborough in 2012-2013. Before taking her class, I didn't even know that art history was considered a discipline separate from history. I learned a huge amount from her and loved her class so much I did a BA and MA in art history. I'm now doing a PhD in art history in London and am aiming for a career in museums. Dr. Wenneker was always so supportive when I emailed her about my ongoing love of art history and all I was learning. She is the reason I will soon be Dr. Rosner. I am immensely grateful to her for instilling a love of art history in me and all of her students.

Isabella Rosner - November 11, 2021 at 01:41 PM

KA

“ Dr. Wenneker was my AP Art History teacher in 2015, and it was her class that inspired me to major in Art History in college and pursue Historic Conservation in graduate school. I will always remember her incredible intelligence and grace, and am so thankful for the foundations she gave me in this field. The day after I graduated from Marlborough, she stopped by my house to deliver a book on Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture that still sits on my desk today. Her passion influenced me and many others, and she will be greatly missed.

Katie Ahmanson - November 11, 2021 at 01:38 PM

AD

“ *Dr. Wenneker was my AP art history teacher during my senior year of Marlborough. I think I might have been in her last class before she retired. I loved her class so much that I decided to major in art history at the University of St Andrews, and I completed a dissertation in art history and graduated in 2020. Now I work in art in New York City, and I would not be here today without Dr. Wenneker. She especially loved to teach about ancient Egyptian art, and to this day, it is one of my favorite periods of art - I think about her every time I go see an exhibition.*

Thank you, Dr. Wenneker!

-Aelish

Aelish Donohue - November 11, 2021 at 01:33 PM

KR

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Kathy Rea - November 09, 2021 at 02:02 AM

KR

Lu was a respected scholar, an amazing educator, and a thoughtful friend. Lu taught so many, so much. With her love and passion for art history, she inspired her students and her colleagues--she definitely set the standard. Ever kind and generous, Lu, you will be missed! -Kathy Rea, Visual Arts Instructor, Marlborough School, Los Angeles

Kathy Rea - November 09, 2021 at 02:20 AM

BS

Lu was my mentor and inspiration for theatre while I was at Ellis. She encouraged confidence and risk taking. There I acted in plays and even directed them, including "Oliver" for the middle school. Her caring, intelligence, and strength was my strength as I ventured into unknown territory. She was, for me, one of those extraordinary and special connections in life and I am so grateful.

Beverly Spiro, Class of '66

Beverly Spiro - November 17, 2021 at 04:23 PM

MG

Lu introduced me to a world of art and history at Ellis that I have enjoyed my entire life - and could share with my mother, who like Lu had PCW as her alma mater. I remember Lu with every museum and gallery visit - and always will. Michelle Girls Class of '70

Michelle Girls - November 17, 2021 at 04:35 PM

AC

*I choke up as I read these tributes and get to know her life beyond her Ellis years.
Lu is the reason I get most every question right on Jeopardy when it comes to art and architecture. Why i developed a minor in college in art history - why I love forms and colors and dimension and context. My art history books are the only high school books which remain on my shelf with notes from her classes. Those books enabled a conversation with my mother - in her advanced alzheimers we could share what Lu taught me and what my mother loved.
But mostly Lu treated us like thinkers - people who had an intellect to explore; she opened up worlds of art and of a desire to travel and to have an opinion and to see the world through lens which went way beyond the academic rubric. May her memory continue to be a blessing. Ann Cohen Ellis Class of '70*

Ann Cohen - November 17, 2021 at 05:32 PM

MD

Forever an inspiration for women who want to achieve in life!

Madeline Louise DeBor

madeline Louise DeBor - November 17, 2021 at 07:01 PM

MB

In my Ellis years in the Sixties(the Sixties?!), Mrs. Wenneker was a force. I remember trembling in fear as I approached one of the assigned oral presentations in Speech Class. Her standards were of the highest, and she yanked us across that threshold into clear and calm articulation. She treated us as capable when we doubted. So for over fifty years, in arenas from making an introduction, explaining a process as teacher and therapist, facilitating boards or even speaking to large audiences, Lu Wenneker hums in my awareness and she leads me to my best. And, as a side note, she saved my bacon when I was a new teacher and called upon to create and Art History class for seniors with a weekend to prepare. Easy! I just lifted my notes from high school Art History. And a final impact; Lu was quite gorgeous in a sophisticated way that awed the little Ellis ladies...

MaryB Grunnagle Barlow - November 18, 2021 at 01:41 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Lu B. Wenneker.*



November 08, 2021 at 08:04 PM