



Mary Lucy Mendenhall Wood

November 5, 1924 - January 9, 2012

Mary Lucy Mendenhall Wood died January 9th at the age of 87 after complications from a fall. She is survived by her husband, Thomas H., and sons David M., Robert B., and Scott D. Wood. Born in Lakeland, Florida on November 5, 1924, Mary Lucy grew up in Tallahassee and graduated from Florida State College for Women (now FSU) in 1945. Her father, Herbert D. Mendenhall, a noted civil engineer and architect, took his wife and Mary Lucy on many car trips across the U.S. before car travel was commonplace, kindling her lifelong love of travel and visiting new places. In the 1940s Mary Lucy lived in Montevideo, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, and visited Machu Picchu on donkey back. She received an M.A. in Political Science from Columbia in 1947 with a thesis on the impact of Giuseppe Garibaldi in Latin America, and worked and translated for the Inter-American Bar Association from 1946-49. She married Thomas H. Wood in 1951 and lived in Chicago while Tom finished his Ph.D. in Physics at the University of Chicago. The family moved to the Philadelphia area in 1953 and to Merion Station in 1963.

She gamely and successfully shepherded her family on two sabbatical trips, to Paris in 1961-62 and to Leicester, England in 1967-68, during which the family traveled throughout Europe and North Africa in a VW microbus. She and Tom traveled extensively into their 70s until physical limitations intruded.

A favorite trip included three days and nights boat trip in an open faluka on the Nile from Luxor to Cairo.

Mary Lucy pursued interests in genealogy and local history especially related to Merion Friends Meeting, where she was the long time member and archivist, and the Lower Merion Historical Society.

She was responsible for a large database of burials based on original records and manuscripts for

Merion Meeting dating back to 1695. She was a lifelong and enthusiastic educator of world history and civilization, publishing her last article—on the innovations and experiences of Napoleon's Surgeon General Dominique Larrey—at age 84.

Mary Lucy Mendenhall Wood told her grandchildren, Aaron, Carolyn, and Richard Wood, “I have gradually evolved a strong religious faith that has nothing to do with any church or any written material. Among Quakers, I say, as they do, that I am a seeker.”

Everyone who knew her recognized her great spirit, love of family, sense of humor and love of language, warm kindness, unassuming erudition, and sweet nature. She was a friend to all.

She will be profoundly missed by family and friends.

A Memorial Meeting for Worship will take place at Merion Friends Meeting,

615 Montgomery
Avenue, Merion, PA on Saturday April 7 at 2:00 pm.