



Shirley Eder Laird

June 2, 1923 - April 8, 2013

Shirley E. Laird (née Eder), died peacefully at home on April 8th, 2013. She was born on June 2, 1923, in Ridley Park, PA, the daughter of the Rev. Charles E. Eder and Wilhelmina Schweikardt Eder. She graduated from the Stevens School, Germantown, in 1940, and from Cedar Crest College, Allentown, in 1944. At Cedar Crest, she was editor of the *Crestiad*, where she discovered that journalism would be the right career for her.

Her first job was on the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, where she was called "Miss Ellaney," for "miscellany," the word she stamped on every page of the copy she wrote. In those days newspaper columns often ended with leftover space, and these miscellaneous bits of copy were used to fill the gaps.

From writing miscellany, she moved to the Evening Chat column and the features department. When the Philadelphia Record was acquired by the Bulletin, she began writing a Sunday column called "People." In addition, she wrote historical features for the Germantown Courier.

While at the Bulletin, she won a competition to be the Philadelphia reporter for Mademoiselle magazine, a part-time job in the college and career department. She held this post for 18 years, and in one of those years was honored as Reporter of the Year.

She married Joseph H. Laird in 1947; he had been a classmate of her brother, the Rev. Craig E. Eder, at Harvard. Joseph, who had been a chemistry major in college, decided to become an Episcopal clergyman and was ordained in 1953. He always claimed that he was influenced by the example of Shirley's father, the Rev. Charles Eder, who had been rector of Grace Episcopal Church, Mt. Airy, for 34 years, as well as by her brother.

Joseph Laird became vicar of St. Mark's, Honey Brook. There, Shirley had three children. The church and vicarage being located in a rural area called "Church Hill," Shirley fulfilled a lifelong dream by buying a horse. She soon added three more and opened a riding school called "Church Hill Ups."

Six years later, the Lairds moved to Wayne, where they lived in a house on the Rosengarten estate, "Chanticleer," now a botanical garden. During this time, she returned to journalism, serving on the editorial staff of the Montgomery County Newspapers, and writing a weekly column called "Once over Lightly."

In the '60s and '70s, she became publications manager for Vincent G. Kling and Associates, Architects. She continued writing her column until leaving to become an entrepreneur. Her business, "Laird Unlimited Editorial Services," provided wordsmith and public relations services to two dozen clients.

In addition to her employment, she served for 20 years on the board of COLLAB, Philadelphia Museum of Art; she was on the vestry of St. David's Episcopal Church, Radnor; and she was publicity chairperson for the Chestnut Hill Committee of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

She is survived by her children Craig E. Laird, Holly A. Laird, and Heather Beaudry, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Her Memorial Service will be held on Sat. April 20th, 11 AM in the Chapel of St. David's Episcopal Church, 763 South Valley Forge Rd., Wayne, PA 19087. Burial will be private in St. Mark's Episcopal Churchyard, Honeybrook, PA.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly suggests contributions be made in her memory to either the Philadelphia Orchestra or Alliance Francaise de Philadelphie.

Previous Events

Service

APR **20**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. David's Episcopal Church
763 South Valley Forge Road
Wayne, PA 19087

Tribute Wall



“ *To my other favorite Aunt - always enjoyed your presence & your wonderful Christmas cards. We'll never forget the glockenspiel concert at Megan's wedding.
God Bless you & give Joe a hug for us.##imported-begin##David & Sandra Laird##imported-end##*

April 20, 2013 at 09:32 AM