



Nancy Stiegemeyer

August 29, 1927 - February 11, 2020

Nancy Stiegemeyer, 92, longtime resident and civic leader of Cape Girardeau died Tuesday, February 11, 2020.

Born Nancy Catherine Hunter on August 29, 1927, she was the daughter of Lois Adelaide (nee Larson) and Isaac McMullin Hunter. Nancy was born and spent her early childhood in the Glenn House. In later years she was a strong supporter of its restoration as an important cultural and historic building in Cape.

Nancy was always a hard worker with strong beliefs who excelled at whatever she did.

She was a leader at Cape Central High School as a strong student and as a member of National Honor Society, Quill and Scroll and the Tiger Literary Staff. She also had numerous leading roles in Red Dagger theater productions and even then had high ambitions. Citing her as Student of the Week in March of 1944, the Tiger student newspaper gushed “Here is a toast to one of Central’s outstanding actresses...She is tall, stately and a dignified senior. Her versatility was displayed by the entirely different parts she has played...Acting, however, is not Nancy’s main interest. For this girl is really heading for the heights. She aspires to become a member of the diplomatic corps when she has finished the education she is planning for herself.”

The paper also mentions that at the Senior Banquet, Nancy was seen “giving a ‘corny’ but good imitation of Katherine Hepburn.” Luckily, Ms. Hepburn had a long career, giving Nancy ample opportunity to offer her “‘corny’ but good” imitation throughout the years.

And, it should be noted that Nancy was chosen as the Most Dramatic in her class. Indeed.

Nancy attended Southeast Missouri State College (now University), earning a Bachelor of Arts in 1948 and a Bachelor of Science in Education in 1951. She also continued to tread the boards, notably starring in the Black Mask Dramatic Club’s 1946 production of “I Remember Mama.”

Soon after graduation, Nancy married Robert J. Stiegemeyer on July 28, 1951. The couple’s first home was in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, where Nancy taught elementary school and Bob was a sales representative for Heinz. In 1952 the couple moved to St. Louis and started a family with the births of Susan, Hunter and Christian. In 1962, the family relocated to Cape Girardeau. Their fourth child, Larson was born in 1963.

The family joined St. Andrew Lutheran Church and was active in the congregation for decades, including Nancy’s service as President of the Women’s Guild, choir member, and later on the church building committee overseeing the construction of the current sanctuary. Legend also has it that Nancy was the first woman to wear a pant suit to a church service at St. Andrew in the late ‘60s. Mod!

Nancy joined Chapter FY of the PEO Sisterhood, achieving 50 years of membership in 2015.

Also in the late '60s, Nancy channeled her lifelong passion for reading and education into support for public libraries. That passion, along with her gift for public speaking and strong will led her to national prominence in library leadership.

It started as a member of the Cape Girardeau Public Library Board of Trustees, of which she was President in 1968-69 (and again in 1978-79). She moved on to leadership roles within the Missouri Library Association and ultimately to the national level, representing Missouri at the White House Conference on Library and Information Services in 1979 and then through election as President of the American Library Trustee Association in 1981. At the time, Nancy passionately wrote that "The American Library Association should speak with a mighty voice to the people of this nation about the value of their libraries and their obligation to protect the freedom of their libraries."

Nancy also leveraged her knowledge and skills for another phase of her support for libraries. She traveled throughout the country for speaking engagements and to conduct library workshops for national library conferences and state library associations. In effect, she created her own consulting business for public libraries at a time when few women could achieve that level of leadership in an industry.

For her decades of service to public libraries, Nancy was the recipient of the Missouri Library Association Meritorious Achievement Award, a Commendation from the City of Cape Girardeau and recognition in the 1982 Who's Who in Library and Information Services. She was also named a Kentucky Colonel and an Honorary Citizen of Texas. But her heart was always in Cape Girardeau.

After stepping back from her roles in support of libraries, Nancy joined the

board of Lutheran Family and Children's Services, serving from 1985 to 1996. She also worked with the organization as Public Relations & Development Coordinator. She helped write grant proposals and traveled to churches throughout southeast Missouri to raise awareness of and support for LFCS. However, the Annual Christmas House Tour is the major legacy of her work there. Combining her interest in architecture and interior design with the fundraising needs of LFCS, Nancy initiated the LFCS Home and Garden Tour fundraiser in 1987. Each year, with a healthy dose of arm twisting and cajoling, Nancy enlisted homeowners around the Cape Girardeau area to open their houses to crowds of strangers. Through her efforts the tour, now the Holiday Home Tour, has grown to be a showcase event every Christmas. For all of her work, Nancy was recognized by LFCS as the 2007 Volunteer of the Year.

In recognition of her commitment to public service, the Zonta Club of Cape Girardeau honored Nancy with their 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award. Certainly an organization dedicated to advancing the status of women could have picked no better recipient.

Nancy is preceded in death by her parents and husband, as well as her brother, John Lewis Hunter, a corporal in the US Army who was killed in action in 1951 in the Korean conflict, fighting in the Battle of Chosin East.

She is survived by four children, Susan Lewis (Meriwether), Hunter Stiegemeyer, Christian Stiegemeyer (Emily) and Larson Stiegemeyer (Peggy Bisping); five grandchildren, Emily Lewis Hindman (Danny), Grace Stiegemeyer, Katherine Stiegemeyer, Jack Stiegemeyer and Lily Stiegemeyer; and three great grandchildren, Scarlett, Ruth and Daniel Hindman.

Visitation will be held 9:00 am to 11:00 am Monday, February 17, 2020 at St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Cape Girardeau.

Funeral service will follow at 11:00 am on Monday at the church with the Rev. John Dehne officiating.

Lunch will be served following the funeral service.

Private burial will be at Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery in Cape Girardeau.

Memorial contributions may be given to Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Southeast Missouri.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

2315 Highway 61 North
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 334-1909
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 17. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
804 N. Cape Rock Dr.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Service

FEB 17. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Andrew Lutheran Church
804 N. Cape Rock Dr.
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

Tribute Wall

GH

“ Nancy's family and mine shared many happy memories for over 35 years and she will be missed.....I am unable to get around very well so missed the funeral but did visit her at the nursing home as often as I could. I want to extend my sympathy to the family and they are in my thoughts and prayers.
Georgia Howe

Georgia M Howe - February 16, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SL

Thank you so much Mrs Howe. We love you! Susan, Hunter, Chris and Larson.

Susan Lewis - March 24, 2020 at 09:22 AM

LM

“ Nancy's legacy is one of service, faith and passion. As a mother, her legacy is her children. Her attitudes, words, and actions will continue to shape the wonderful human beings they have become even after she is gone, Her voice and her view of the world are alive in them. Rest in peace in the hands of God Nancy, you have fulfilled you role and purpose here on earth, Laura McCloskey

Laura McCloskey - February 13, 2020 at 09:06 PM