



Mary Shellabarger Cleave

JAN 31, 1928 - SEP 12, 2020



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COMPLETE FUNERAL SERVICES

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Mary Shellabarger Cleave

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Mary Shellabarger Cleave, 92, passed away September 12, 2020, after a brief stay in hospital and physical therapy while trying to return to her home in Primrose Retirement Community of Decatur, where she had enjoyed life for the past 7 years. Mary was born January 31, 1928, in Salina, Kansas, to Maud (Dunlap) Shellabarger and William Lincoln Shellabarger, Jr. She lived in Decatur almost all her life except when she was away at boarding schools including Hacienda Del Sol in Tucson, Arizona, Ferrie Hall and Dana Hall, and at universities that included Connecticut College, University of Illinois, and University of Southern California, where she graduated with a degree in math. She was very good in the sciences, achieving the highest test score in physics they had seen at Dana Hall, while also playing goalie for the field hockey team. Mary Dunlap Shellabarger met young Scott William Cleave, Jr. at Bidwell's Tavern on a football weekend in Urbana, and they were married a few years later, on November 25, 1955, in Decatur, Illinois, where she grew up. She was a marvelous homemaker and chef, raising four boys who will miss her dearly. Surviving are her four children, Scott (Paula) of Evanston, Illinois,



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John (Mary Beth) also of Evanston, Illinois, Robert (Michelle) of Half Moon Bay, California, and William (Cynthia) of Pennington, New Jersey; eight grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and her younger sister, Helen (Richard) Clark of Bellevue, Washington. Mary had many lifelong friends in Decatur and elsewhere and enjoyed frequent parties with them. Her sons remember her distinctive laugh during “bridge club” parties where they think nary a hand of cards was played. As the children launched out, Mary rekindled her love of art, taking classes at local universities and colleges then helping to open Gallery 510 in her beloved great aunt’s former home on Decatur Street. She showed her paintings, jewelry and ceramics throughout the area and held art workshops for local school groups. She leaves behind a community made richer by her contributions, memories of many close friends, and the legacy of a loving mother and spouse that remains foundational for her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Scott, and her older sister, Anne (Ira) Abbott. In lieu of flowers, her family asks you to support Decatur Memorial Hospital Hospice Fund, which Mary and her parents supported through the years. There will be a private family service at her family’s room in the Fairlawn Mausoleum.



Events

Mary Shellabarger Cleave

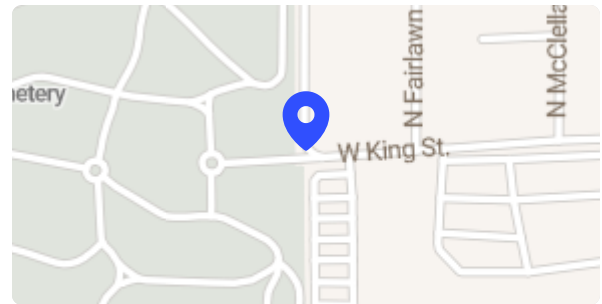
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Cemetery Details



Fairlawn Cemetery

1600 West King Street, Decatur IL 62522





Tribute Wall

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JE

Jennifer posted:

We met Mary through the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Decatur. She was always kind and we appreciate the time we had with her. - Darwin Shroyer & Jennifer Sekosky

September 23 at 8:10 AM

BD

Barbara J Dove posted:

I first met Mary in the painting classroom of Marv Klaven at Millikin University. We were both non-traditional students. We painted together, talked things over and critiqued each others' work. Along with another non-traditional we started the Gallery 510 so we could continue to paint together. Mary was very instrumental in making this happen. She was pleased to have the gallery in her great-aunt's former home. She recounted to me many fun times she had as a child in the home. Her art studio was in her aunt's master bedroom and our office was in the sewing room. I learned a lot from Mary. She was always trying something new with her artwork. I was impressed by her inquisitiveness. Whether it was something new in art, cooking recipes or making a Halloween costume for the grandkids, she loved trying new things. I will always remember Mary fondly. She was a good friend, intelligent and caring. I will treasure my painting by her now even more. I'm sorry for the family's loss.

September 19 at 6:56 AM

MD

Michelle Dillow shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

We first met Mary Cleave in the mid 1990's when we moved next door to her and Scott. We were unloading our furniture and she brought over a freshly baked loaf of bread and a jar of jam and introduced herself. We have many fond memories of them. We also have a treasured piece of art that we had Mary paint for us. With sympathy, Michelle and Gene Dillow



September 18 at 3:14 PM

AF

Andrew Freeman posted:

To the Mary Cleave family, Your mother Mary was a warm hearted and creative artist. She was always interested in you, and if one of her sons was off in the world ; Mary had a neat wall map in the kitchen to show where you were. Many excellent childhood memories. I hope and pray for you at this time. You have a great mother. Your friend, Andrew Freeman.

September 18 at 7:32 AM



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Nicholas Burton posted:

In my office hangs a beautiful Mary Cleave still life oil painting. Many clients have commented on its quality and colorfulness. Scott Cleave was a fellow lawyer and friend, a true gentleman. I believe I acquired the Mary Cleave painting at a Gallery 510 exhibit of her work. The painting is a welcome contrast to the dull presence of framed diplomas and legal credentials, books, and file cabinets. To Scott and Mary Cleave's family I send my sympathy and best wishes. --Nick Burton, Decatur.

September 18 at 4:06 AM



Media

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Michelle Dillow shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

September 18 at 3:14 PM



Commissioned art of the Cliffs of Moher



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Mary by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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