



Marilyn Bowie

March 10, 1926 - May 8, 2015

Marilyn Bowie of Bloomington and New York City, aged 89, died at her daughter's home in Bloomington on Friday, May 8, 2015.

Marilyn was the daughter of Samuel and Adele Miller, and was born and brought up in the Bronx, New York. A natural leader, she was president of the Walton High School student body; in that capacity, in 1943, she christened a US Navy minesweeper, YMS-362, at City Island in New York City. Marilyn was a graduate of Bennington College, class of 1947. In 1955 she married Theodore R. Bowie, a professor in IU's Fine Arts Department. They raised two children in Bloomington, Alexandra Bowie, of Brooklyn, New York, and Jocelyn Bowie, of Bloomington. Ted Bowie died in 1995.

Marilyn Bowie was a passionate and tireless advocate for women's health care and reproductive rights. In 1965 she joined the recently formed Planned Parenthood of Monroe County as its first executive director. She shepherded its growth from a small local provider of services, with a clinic one day a week, to a regional powerhouse. When she resigned in 1987, Planned Parenthood of South Central Indiana served 22,000 women annually; the next year, after a merger with Wabash Valley Planned Parenthood, it became the 14th largest affiliate in the country. Marilyn worked at the national

level for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America in New York City from 1987-1995, bringing similar growth to affiliates around the country. Planned Parenthood of Southern Indiana awarded her the Margaret Sanger Award in 1989.

Marilyn and her husband were world travellers, marrying in Bangkok, Thailand, and honeymooning at Angkor Wat. They brought their two very young daughters with them to Tokyo for seven months in 1962-63, taking five months to get there via Europe and Asia.

Marilyn liked to say that they could have smuggled anything they wanted, as the presence of two young daughters disarmed customs officials around the world, and their baggage was never searched. Marilyn and Ted were among the first Americans to visit China when the People's Republic reopened to the West, visiting with a group from Bloomington in 1981. They topped that with a Christmas in Cairo (Egypt) adventure in 1984. Marilyn continued to travel until just a few years ago; she went on her own to Australia and New Zealand, with her brother Leonard to hike in Switzerland, and to the Galapagos and Costa Rica with friends. Asked once by a reporter if she were a workaholic she denied it, saying "I love vacation."

In addition to her daughters, Marilyn is survived by her sons-in-law, Daniel Richman of Brooklyn and David Semmel of Bloomington, and five grandchildren: Nick, Eli, and Cassidy Molin and Matthew and Rebecca Richman. Her brothers, Leonard Miller and M. Robert Miller, survive her, as does San Miller, Bob's wife, and their children and grandchildren. A companion of later years, Tom Hill, died in 2009. Marilyn's family and many friends will remember her sense of humor, her joyous and infectious laugh, the succession of convertibles in which she sped around town, her competitive

tennis game, and her fierce and protective love for her entire family.

The family will hold a memorial service in Bloomington on Saturday, June 6, and a memorial service in New York City on Sunday, June 14. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to a charity of your choice.

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory 4155 South Old State Road 37 is handling the arrangements and online condolences may be sent to the family at www.allenfuneralhome.org.

Tribute Wall

KA

“ I loved this lady! She was such a positive influence in my life. She hired me at Planned Parenthood through the high school work study program. I could not have wished for a better mentor. The job skills I learned were valuable. The compassion she showed for others, and her high standards were the perfect example for a young girl. I remember her smile as she handed me cash to buy office supplies! Wow, she trusted me! Later on she showed me the secret panel in her office where the keys to everything were kept! Her trust and confidence in me will not ever be forgotten. I remember her beautiful smile and kind ways. I could not have hoped for a better teacher. I also remember her changing into tennis clothes at the end of the work day, and wondering where she got all that energy! Rest peacefully my dear friend! I am honored to have known you.

Kathy - October 26, 2015 at 03:59 PM

CH

“ Quite a lady! She was always so nice to me, not only on the tennis court, but also after Community Band concerts.

Charles Davis - October 26, 2015 at 03:59 PM

KA

“ I remember when Marilyn would participate in the arthritis aquatics class I taught at the Y. Then we caught up with her at Sterling House. She was always so pleasant and cheerful when we saw her. May her memory be for a blessing.
Karen Franks

Karen Franks - October 26, 2015 at 03:59 PM