



Mary Lou Walbridge

November 18, 1924 - December 29, 2015

Mary Lou Walbridge, 91, passed away at Bloomington Hospice on Tuesday, Dec. 29 after a short illness.

She was born in St. Louis, the daughter of Col. Vance Laird Sailor, a veteran of both World Wars, and Madge Lewis Sailor. She graduated from Kirkwood High School in metropolitan St. Louis in 1941. She graduated from Syracuse University in 1946, majoring in speech and theater. During the summers she worked for the British Army in Washington, D.C. Recently she published *An American Girlhood*, a vivid memoir of coming of age in the era of World War II.

In 1947 she married John Walbridge, Jr. The couple eventually settled in Escanaba in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where her husband operated a lumber business. She worked at her husband's company, turning her talent for design to converting the customers' sketches of dream homes into practical house plans. Over three decades she was responsible for the plans of hundreds of homes built all over the country including her own, a beautiful house on a forested bluff overlooking the Escanaba River.

She was a longtime member of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Escanaba.

She was very much a southern lady, incorrigibly sociable, befriending even the most casual acquaintances. She was proud of her homes, decorating them beautifully, and was an elegant and

hospitable hostess.

She was predeceased by her parents; her brother, physicist Vance Lewis Sailor; her daughter-in-law, anthropologist Linda Strickland Walbridge; and her cousin Jane Salter, with whom she had grown up. She is survived by her son, John Walbridge III, a professor; her daughter, Mary Lewis Vandeveld, a retired obstetrician; her daughter-in-law, Frances Trix, a linguist; her son-in-law David Vandeveld; her grandsons, John and Nathaniel Walbridge and their wives Sara and Tia Walbridge; three step-grandchildren, David and Eric Vandeveld and their wives Natalie and Joanna, and Ramsay Trix and his wife Shawna; and two great-granddaughters, Elizabeth and Mira Walbridge, and two step great-granddaughters, Adeline and Madelyn Vandeveld.

A funeral service will be held in the Terrace Room at Meadowood Retirement Community at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday January 2.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be sent to the RV Care-A-Vanner Program at Habitat for Humanity International at www.habitat.org/cd/giving/one/donate.

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory is handling the arrangements and online condolences may be sent to the family at www.allenfuneralhome.org.

Tribute Wall

VS

“ *What a beautiful obituary about a wonderful woman. Special thanks for mentioning my mother, Jane Salter, who loved Mary Lou as a sister. Mary Lou and John were especially kind to my family after mom died, filling in pieces of family history, pictures, and great memories of the Stork Club in NYC and of working for the British in Washington.*

Mary Lou and John's visits to McLean and Homestead were highlights for my parents because they adored Mary Lou and John so.

Straight to heaven for her--she lived for family, for service to others, and as a kind and loving example to us all. Rest in peace, Mary Lou--love you!

Vance Salter, Miami

Vance Salter - January 13, 2016 at 07:33 PM

MI

“ *I've had the honor and privilege to have known Mary Lou for many years. She was a very classy lady and was always uplifting and socially top flight. She was caring and thoughtful and will be missed by all who had the pleasure to have known her. She is probably teeing it up in heaven. My deepest condolences to the Walbridge family, she was a beacon of light on a stormy day. She will be missed. May your wonderful memories of your time together give you strength during this difficult time. The Nardi's*

Michael Nardi - January 07, 2016 at 12:21 PM