



Nancy R. Hiller

July 2, 1959 - August 29, 2022

Nancy R. Hiller, 63, of Bloomington, Ind., died August 29, 2022, after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. She was surrounded by her sister, Magda Marakovits (Eric), husband, Mark Longacre, and sister-in-law, Amy Shanahan (Patrick). She was the owner of NR Hiller Design, a furniture making studio in Bloomington.

Nancy was born in 1959, in Miami Beach, Fla., daughter of Mary Lee Adler and Herbert L. Hiller. She attended Queen's College, London, and later Cambridge University, where she studied Ancient Greek and Aramaic. After a term, she decided to leave Cambridge to train as a furniture maker. Nancy returned to college, IU, Bloomington, at the age of 30, graduating with a master's in Religious Studies, specializing in ethics. In 2013 she and Mark Longacre were married.

She is survived by her loving parents, husband, sister, and niece, Wyatt Hiller Wilson, as well as cousins and dear friends.

Of all the adjectives that can be used to describe Nancy, those that come foremost to mind among her many friends and colleagues are brave, hard-working, talented, erudite, funny, kind, and... she'd be the first to admit this... wordy. She was forever in pursuit of perfection, whether that was in her work as a furniture maker, her writing, or her treatment of others. In the same strong, determined, and steady way that she moved through her life and career, Nancy confronted her pancreatic cancer diagnosis, thinking creatively, managing one obstacle at a time, learning, teaching, and advocating, exuding

grace through it all.

Nancy's woodworking career began with that training in England, where she lived for 16 years from the age of 12. She earned a City and Guilds of London certificate, then worked for designer Roy Griffiths making kitchens. She also worked for Millside Cabinetmakers and the carpentry shop of the Imperial War Museum at Duxford Airbase before returning to the U.S. Back here, she worked for Wall-Goldfinger and Credence Customer Furniture, which she ran with her former husband, Kent Perelman, before opening her own shop, NR Hiller Design Inc. in 1995 (nrhillerdesign.com).

She was a teacher, author, and craftsperson of the highest degree. Among her books are: *Shop Tails*, *Kitchen Think*, *English Arts & Crafts Furniture*, *Making Things Work: Tales from a Cabinetmaker's life*, *The Hoosier Cabinet in Kitchen History*, *A Home of Her Own*, and *Historic Preservation in Indiana*. Her blogs include *Making Things Work* at Lost Art Press and *Pro's Corner* on FineWoodworking.com. She's written numerous articles for *Fine Woodworking*, *Lost Art Press*, *Popular Woodworking*, and a host of other magazines.

This quote, from a column she wrote called "The problem with passion," sums up some of Nancy's views on the profession she chose. As always, she kept it real:

"Doing what you love for a living demands that you cultivate a larger understanding of loving what you do—one that will accommodate the headaches, stress, sporadic income, difficult clients, occasional doldrums, and sleepless nights that can come with being self-employed. When you think about it, this is no different from the deeply committed love that grounds a long marriage, which may involve stretches of monotony, moments of doubt, tending to a sick spouse (or parent, or child) and the occasional hour or (let's be honest) more of utter exasperation. "

Contributions can be made in Nancy's honor to PanCan.org. A Celebration of Life may be announced in the future. Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 South Old State Road 37, Bloomington, have been entrusted with

arrangements. Online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at www.allencares.com

Tribute Wall

CB

“ *The message is for Mark, her husband. I had met your late wife at a woodworking conference and we sort of sympathized around our mutual love of art, Arts and Crafts productions and exchange of correspondence, and my discovery of a kindred spirit. Please accept my most sincere condolences and know that I share your grief as I, also, lost with her untimely death the start of a friendship that was cut short by her departure for chipmaker haven. She will be remembered for a long time, and every time I enter my workshop.*

*Claude Beaudry, Ph.D.
Ste-Christine, Canada*

Claude Beaudry - October 17, 2022 at 03:00 PM

RL

“ *Nancy and Kent made my living room couch when they worked together as Credence Custom Furniture, although the couch design was mine with improvements by them. Today, I was astounded to see that the New York Times published her obituary! Here's a link: https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/25/obituaries/nancy-hiller-dead.html?unlocked_article_code=u3IE8QXA4LNZ1vR4lvYa6zD_9PA2dkYaXT3KFyvrCVzRSQihhCrWrj0p41USR-5-V2VLcQrHeo0SvJg0zH_yDuseO2jpgv4A4-cK2tFQXb8UBU1psKz-glsm3tlZduTm-kRwR6uqUTiNO_E9MwmoN2oKNlu8D_Fb3psop5NYcnawTSJyKnEwiiZXPBZyXvKsjlWQEHPmuMxiYWC0TuFfCh9m_0Kn2RzmX9rNUCXe6XcGyUwOJyp70heQ2z6oBXoK0iQYki3c2fknR2YuJZ-UP1xkKzYYM4sQbglMdgtm4Q59AMzyrROFr3igThtV2B2SPZ9mYYYcNum2MpBzg&smid=share-url I always enjoyed any time I ran into her in town. My condolences to her family.*

Russ Lyons - September 25, 2022 at 06:24 PM

AA

“ Nancy was tapped by Chris Sturbaum to design the cabinets for the kitchen remodel of our historic old house. The integrity she demonstrated in choosing a design for the cabinets was matched to her faithfulness to the original design and detail of the architect and his blueprints, while making it current and modern. I think of Nancy every day and thank her for her vision and craftsmanship.

Annette Alpert - September 05, 2022 at 01:37 PM

SH

“ I flew to Deland for cousin Magda's wedding. It was a gorgeous night. I didn't know many people and needed my partner in crime for the night. Nancy seemed like she needed the same. I didn't expect it. The truth was that I barely knew Nancy.

I got to spend an evening with a friend who was silly, playful, sarcastic, and so much fun. People later commented that they didn't often see that Nancy. I felt like the 3rd luckiest person in the room (after Chip & Mag). It's how I always have and will remember her.

I think when the angels present the greatest woods for Nancy to work with and they're eagerly finding their seats for her upcoming lecture, she won't know that they'll all be whispering "I hear she's the best person to find at a wedding!"

We'll only now will start to miss you, yet we'll never skip a beat for our love for you. Goodbye dear cousin Nancy.

scott hiller - September 05, 2022 at 01:14 PM

MC

“ I count myself lucky for having met Nancy. She always struck me as a profoundly poetic human being.

Michel Chaouli - September 04, 2022 at 03:13 PM

RM

“ Nancy Hiller was a force of nature and a force for good. I was privileged to have taught her, to have learned from her, and to have enjoyed her generous friendship. From the moment we met, I grasped the power of her mind. Nancy understood the importance of ideas, of clear thinking, of the written and spoken word, and of concerted action. She was a source of boundless curiosity and creative energy, someone who embodied her convictions with charm, humor, and grace. In the classroom and in the workshop, she was brilliant, hardworking, and genuine. I send heartfelt condolences to her family and loved ones. She was taken from us far too soon, and I will miss her.
In sympathy, Richard Miller, Chicago, IL

Richard Miller - September 04, 2022 at 01:27 PM



“ Her sister shared a picture of me when we shared interest in each other & Nancy declared me a 10 ~ I always liked that about her! Oh, and she was a very fine master carpenter, indeed, so there's always that . . . ;)

Ted Wendler - September 04, 2022 at 12:49 PM

MC

“ I met Nancy in 1994 and she showed me her scrapbook of her finished projects. I fell in love with her work. I had never seen such beautiful work. She was more than a craftsman, she was an artist. I started having her make furniture for me, first a bed in ash. Then in 2000, I had her do the renovation of my house doing a custom built in buffet cabinet and entertainment center. The last was a custom hallstand in red oak. I was a mortgage loan officer and I financed the Pope House and her business when she started in 1995. When she sold it and moved to the county, I financed her next house and workshop. She was a wonderful teacher, craftsperson, historic preservationist and dear friend. I will truly miss her infectious laugh and wonderful sense of humor.

M Elizabeth Cox-Ash - September 03, 2022 at 01:06 PM

DC

I met Nancy on the job--on my job as a newspaper feature writer in New Castle, Indiana, home of the Hoosier cabinet, which Nancy wrote about in a beautiful book.

After that, she had a book signing in New Castle at the historical society and I attended. I told her a story about how I have a Hoosier-style cabinet, only mine is a Seller's, but it's also made in Indiana. I said it is my consolation prize for not getting the house I wanted when another family bought it.

What she next I will always remember! She said that it made perfect sense. How in the world so?

"Cabinet means small cabin," Nancy explained. "You didn't get the big cabin but you got the small one."

I love that story so much. We had dinner together once in Bloomington when I was in town visiting a friend.

I admire her many skills and talents. I've sure thought about her a lot lately. Peace to her loved ones.

Donna Cronk - September 10, 2022 at 01:39 PM

ES

Nancy was one of my favorite authors -- in both a personal and professional way, as I edited three of her books (all for IUP). She was always a gem to work with, and when once I emailed her out of the blue to ask a question related to her expertise, she responded with typical grace and kindness. I never knew she was well enough known to merit a long obit in the NYT, but I certainly knew she a person of great merit.

Eric Schramm - October 16, 2022 at 03:31 PM