



Patricia Nicoll Agnew

May 8, 1937 - April 9, 2025

Patricia (Pat) Nicoll Agnew, 87, died peacefully on April 9 at Hospice House in Bloomington, in the company of loved ones and her cat, Cleo.

Pat is survived by her sister, Ruth Bronzan, and her brothers, Roger (JoAnn) and Matthew (Mary), and former sister-in-law, Diana; her brothers-in-law, Bill (Penny) and Hewes (Susan), and sister-in-law, Zanne; her children Emily (Duke), Elizabeth, Ken (Mrill), and Andrew (Maia); grandchildren Emlyn, Isaiah, Miranda (David), Quinn, and Cal; and extended family members. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Gates, and by her older brother, Brian, who died in infancy. Pat was a beloved, steady presence among family and friends, quietly thoughtful, fiercely independent, and deeply generous in her love and care for others.

Pat was born on May 8, 1937, near London, England, the eldest daughter of Kate and Ted Nicoll of Saskatchewan, Canada. She grew up in Princeton, New Jersey. Pat entered Wellesley College in 1955, where, in her sophomore year, she met Gates Agnew, a senior at Princeton University. As he told it, he'd been fixed up with "the most beautiful girl at Wellesley," but she fell ill. Pat often reflected on her good fortune in accepting the last-minute blind date. It changed her life. The two were married in 1958, and Pat completed her B.A. degree in History at the University of Hawaii while Gates taught at Punahou School. After three years in California, where Gates studied for his doctorate

at Stanford University and their daughters were born, the family moved to Bloomington, when Gates accepted a job in the English Department at Indiana University. Their sons were born soon after.

Pat creatively adapted her early work life to the demands of four small children. She ran a nursery school at their Adair Lane home, taught for Head Start for two years, then taught as a Montessori teacher. Pat taught her daughters how to sew, and all her kids how to cook. She was the creative force behind many family rituals, from weeknight dinners to pancakes on Saturday mornings, brunches on Sundays, and English-style high tea on Sunday afternoons. Each Christmas she hosted a cookie decorating party for numerous families. She and Gates took their kids hiking and swimming, to tennis lessons and music lessons, and to plays and operas.

In 1974, Pat began her PhD in clinical psychology at IU, which she completed in 1978. She was hired in 1979 as a psychologist at the South-Central Community Mental Health Center specializing in Children and Family Services. In 1987, she started a private practice with her close friends and colleagues Marsha McCarty and Larry Barnhill. Around this time, Pat and Gates became active in the Bloomington Bicycle Club. A serious cycling accident in 1991 limited Pat's future athletic endeavors, but she felt fortunate to be able to continue her private practice, to contribute to the community, and to enjoy traveling, even as she dealt courageously with chronic pain.

Pat and Gates found an extended family at Trinity Episcopal Church. They served in almost every possible capacity over the years, from starting the church nursery in the 1960s to founding the Good Parenting Support group some fifty years later. They also sang in the choir and spent many nights volunteering for the Interfaith Winter Shelter. In the community, Pat volunteered for the Guardian ad Litem program, advocated against the death penalty, and, after retiring in 2005, volunteered for several years as a therapist

at Catholic Charities Bloomington. A voracious reader, Pat thoroughly enjoyed being a member of a local New Yorker reading group and a peace and justice reading group.

Pat had a gift for nurturing relationships that spanned generations. She was lovingly attentive to her family, developed lifelong friendships with the neighbors on Adair Lane, and maintained close ties with the family who farmed the land that later became Hoosier Acres, where she and Gates lived for fifty-three years. Pat deeply valued her women's group, nine close friends who met weekly for more than forty years. She also organized many wonderful trips with friends and relatives. This included a sabbatical year in England in 1970, in which the Agnews were joined by the Barnes, beloved family friends to the present day. In her final years, Pat was sustained by the caring visits of friends to her cottage at Bell Trace, where she served them lattes and biscotti.

Pat was always grateful for the family tradition of summer vacations at an island cottage in Ontario, which began in 1948 and lasted for over seven decades. Her parents built their own cottage in 1960, which Pat and Gates cared for in later years, before the next generation took over. As a child, parent, and then grandparent, Pat loved the family cottage on Newboro Lake as an annual gathering place for friends and extended family.

Pat knew how blessed she was never to have wanted for food, shelter, love, or money. This knowledge, strengthened by her religious faith, fed her deep sense of gratitude and fueled her determination to serve others whenever and however she could.

The Agnew family is deeply grateful to Penny Sinn, Pat's home assistant, for her dedicated care of Pat. Thank you also to Katherine Bittner, Jim Kirkham,

and the staff of Bell Trace and Hospice House for their attentive care.

A memorial service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 7 at Trinity Episcopal Church Bloomington, followed by a reception in the Great Hall. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to Trinity Episcopal Church, the Community Kitchen of Monroe County, or Death Penalty Action. Allen Funeral Home and Crematory have been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at www.allencares.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUN 7. 1:00 PM (ET)

Trinity Episcopal Church
111 S Grant St
Bloomington, IN 47408-4031
(812) 336-4466

Tribute Wall

WH

“ I had every intention of attending Ms. Agnew's memorial service today, but a rain-related emergency on my farm required my immediate attention. I am, indeed, sorry to have missed it. While I did not have the honor of knowing Ms. Agnew, I know she and her husband, Dr. Gates Agnew, were exemplary parents, for I had the privilege and delight of having as students in high school all four of their exceptional children. Each one was eager to learn, polite and attentive. As old-fashioned as it may sound, they were ladies and gentlemen. To them I extend my deepest sympathy for their loss of father and, now, mother. You are in my thoughts and prayers. Most sincerely, Bill Hays

William Hays - June 07, 2025 at 04:48 PM

CB

“ Pat was one of my favorite clients. Pat, Gates and the whole family treated me with genuine kindness, always caring and with respect. I will always miss both of them.
Pat and Gates knew how to raise a family and did a wonderful job. Sending condolences to the entire family.

Cindy Benson - June 06, 2025 at 09:42 PM

CB

“ Cindy Benson lit a candle in memory of Patricia Agnew



Cindy Benson - June 06, 2025 at 09:33 PM

AM

“ I send you all warm thoughts at this time. I knew Pat mainly through Trinity Church where she was an important member, friendly, welcoming and fun loving. She is missed by me and my family.

Antonia Matthew - May 17, 2025 at 01:50 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Patricia Nicoll Agnew.



May 02, 2025 at 12:29 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Patricia Nicoll Agnew.

May 02, 2025 at 12:29 PM

MB

“ Patricia, and Gates were amongst our favorite and most loyal customers and it has been an honor and a pleasure to prepare their dinners for all these years.
Patrick and I will always remember them with great affection.
Our condolences and love to the family,
Patrick and Marina

Marina Ballor-Fiore - April 23, 2025 at 09:53 AM

JW

“ Pat and I were in a non violence, peace and justice book group together. I was late to the group (only 10 years in) and in addition to her beautiful mind, she had a loving and caring soul. I began to visit her from time to time when she and Gates moved to Bell Trace. She would, in her gracious manner, prepare a light lunch and coffee and I would bring dessert. We were able to laugh a lot which was a real blessing! She sure did love her family and was very proud of all of you. She was even up for writing some postcards with me before the election! This world has lost a shining example of what it means to live a good life. I love and miss you, Pat

Joan White - April 22, 2025 at 12:40 PM

RW

Pat's memorial service today was such a joyous and fitting tribute to one of the most loving and giving persons I have ever known. The scores of friends who gathered today were there because she touched all of us in some special way. To also feel the presence of her beloved Gates was an added grace note to the day. Funny, their names, Pat and Gates, seem to go together as one word. Two truly beautiful people.

Ruth and Jim Witten

ruth witten - June 07, 2025 at 09:30 PM