

BIOGRAPHY

A native of Reading, Pennsylvania, Barbara Louise (Houser) Walker was an outstanding person, artist, daughter, sister, wife, mother, aunt, mother-in-law, grandmother and friend.

In 1935 her family moved to the Philadelphia area. Married in 1951, Thomas E. Walker and Barbara were a symbiotic, powerhouse team. He was the yin to her yang. There really was no Barbara without Tom and visa versa. They were a package deal!

Tom and Barbara have two children, Thomas (Tom) R. Walker (wife Deb Booher) and Margaret (Peg) Elaine Cohen (husband Steven), four grandchildren, Heather, David, Alex and Blaire and three great grandchildren, Aliyah, Asher and Mason.

Tom and Barbara's welcoming home was a place of patience, kindness and great joy. At a turbulent time in America's history (1960's), Barbara and Tom generously provided a safe, warm and accepting environment for all in need of a place to "be". She saw the light in everyone, judged no one, and gave herself fully to all of her various pursuits.

Barbara's drawings first appeared in school publications and homework assignments at Shaw Jr. High School. Her contributions to the Bartram High School yearbook and several shows earned her a city wide "High School Artist of the Year", which included a partial scholarship to Tyler School of Art. Tied scholastically with another senior for top of her class, she was denied valedictorian honors as "she was only an art student." Barbara's continued studies took her to the Fleisher Art School, Philadelphia Museum of Art and Tyler School of Art at Temple University. Her most influential teachers were Nathan Margolis, Hobson Pittman, and Raphael Sabatini.

A Member of Artists Equity, Barbara was the recipient of numerous awards and honors for both her paintings and sculptures. She had four one-man shows and exhibited widely in the Delaware Valley. She was represented in "Pennsylvania 71," Harrisburg, "Women in Focus," Philadelphia Art Alliance; and the "Lancaster National Art Competition," Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

She exhibited locally at Woodmere, Allens Lane, Phillips Mill, Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia Civic Center, Cheltenham Art Center, Philadelphia Art Museum, the University of Delaware and National Academy of Design, New York. Three of Barbara's paintings are in the permanent collection of the Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia, PA.

Barbara taught painting at Abington, Cheltenham and Oreland Art Centers, Old York Road Art Guild and Upper Moreland Adult Evening School.

Tom crafted the frames for over 90% of Barbara's paintings, creating innovative double frames, wrapped frames and folded box frames.

Barbara suffered with severe back pain much of her adult life but remained vibrant and active throughout. She fought cancer twice, but succumbed on October 31, 1996. As her last generous gift, Barbara requested that her body be donated to a medical hospital (Temple University) via Humanity Gifts Registry. In 1998 her ashes were returned to Mr. Tom E. Walker and since that time, Barbara's ashes have been taken far and wide by the family members, including local art establishments, Florida, Nevada, Hawaii, Bali, Indonesian Islands, Singapore, Caribbean Islands, and France.

She is missed!