



Gunlög Elisabeth Anderson

January 22, 1938 - February 1, 2023

In Loving Memory

Gunlög Elisabeth Anderson

Please join in a celebration of her extraordinary life:

Saturday, March 11 at 1 p.m.

at Central Presbyterian Church (On the Square)

Chambersburg, PA

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Doctors Without Borders,

to support their urgent relief efforts in Turkey, Syria, and Ukraine.

Gunlög Elisabeth Anderson of Fayetteville, Pennsylvania passed away February 1, 2023-in her 85th year-at the Paramount Nursing Facility after a brief hospitalization for heart failure and related complications.

Born January 22, 1938 in Helsinki, Finland, Gunlög was the daughter of Olav and Ragna (Nikander) Ahlbäck, the wife of Rev. Raymond K. Anderson, Professor Emeritus and former Chair of Philosophy and Religion at Wilson College, and the beloved mother of Erik, Jennifer, and Martin Anderson.

Gunlög was also Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts at Wilson College and an Elder in the Presbyterian Church. In addition to caring for her family, she dedicated her life to education and public service, as an active community member, creative scholar, and inspiring teacher and mentor to many.

Gunlög grew up in Helsinki and attended a Swedish girls' school, where she learned exquisite penmanship and made many life-long friends. She fondly recalled story hours with Tove Jansson, famed children's author, who illustrated her whimsical Moomin stories on the blackboard.

Gunlög's intellectual curiosity and appreciation of art and culture were inherited from her parents, who collaborated on ground-breaking research on Finland-Swedish folk culture. Her father was Professor of Nordic Languages at the University of Helsinki and later became a full-time lexicographer and founded a historic boat museum. Her mother authored several influential books about the architecture, decorative arts, and material culture of southwestern Finland. Pursuing her own interest in Vikings, Gunlög participated in excavations of iron-age sites on Åland; advised by Prof. Ella Kivikoski, she earned an MA in Archaeology and Liberal Arts at the University of Helsinki.

Gunlög and Ray met at a summer language course at Bonn University, Germany. But it was largely through correspondence that their love blossomed. After they wed in 1960, they moved to Switzerland where Ray studied with theologian Karl Barth. During these years, the young couple had a memorable time living in Geneva, as affiliates of the John Knox International Center. True to its mission to foster community and dialogue, they enjoyed meeting students there from all over the world.

Raymond then brought his Finnish bride home to California, where she was warmly welcomed by his family and where Erik was born.

Upon settling in Chambersburg, PA, where their children were raised, Gunlög initially worked at the college library. Eager to continue her studies, she enrolled at Bryn Mawr College. Balancing parenting with weekly treks to attend graduate seminars, she earned an MA in 1975 and five years later a PhD in Classical and Near-Eastern Archaeology.

Her dissertation (supervised by Prof. Machteld Mellink) focused on the ancient Turkish city of Gordion-popularly known as the "Royal City of Midas." Rather than focus on its gilded elite, however, she sought to illuminate the lives of ordinary people, whose remains lay in the common cemetery long overshadowed by the treasure-laden tumulus. She shared her findings through publications and conferences, including the American Institute of Archeology. After teaching as an adjunct at Penn State Mont Alto and facilitating Dickinson College's self-study, Gunlög was instrumental in founding Wilson College's Adult Learning Program, which supports individuals whose education was interrupted, for whatever reason, in completing their degrees. Serving as its director from 1986 to 1996, she played a key leadership role in developing innovative strategies to make postsecondary education more accessible to nontraditional students. Highly regarded as a model for lifelong learning, this program continues to expand and thrive. Wilson, for example, was one of the first colleges in the nation to offer a residential college experience for single parents with their children. Whether advising a returning veteran or helping a young mom access on-campus daycare, as Gunlög explained, "We listen to each student's special story-their hopes, their concerns-and we come to know and understand what these students are about. Although we always adopt a very professional manner, the students know that we care about them and that we honor their stories."

Upon rejoining the full-time faculty, she was promoted to Associate Professor in 1996 and to Full Professor in 2003. For over 25 years, she also was intimately involved in the international student club's activities and in organizing the annual Orr Forum, exploring the ethical dimensions of vital social issues (such as the AIDS crisis, race relations, biomedical debates, and gun violence). Keeping apace together, the Professors Anderson retired in 2014. As long as health and worldly events permitted, Gunlög enjoyed travelling, teaching OLLI classes, lively book group discussions, and, perhaps above all, many happy visits with her grandchildren.

A unique and brilliant person, Gunlög is remembered affectionately by her many family members, friends, colleagues, and students. Nephew Tom Anderson, for one, recalls "times spent in Gunlög's bright presence: To any conversation," he says, "she could bring impressive intellect and wit, always with unfailing affection and good humor. We will miss her mischievous smile." Others recall her cosmopolitan perspective, warm empathy, and openness to diversity.

Gunlög was predeceased by her parents, her brothers Folke and Tore Ahlbäck, and her younger son, Martin E. Anderson of Seattle. In addition to her extended family in Finland, England, and the United States, she is survived by Raymond, her husband of 62 years; brother Jöran Ahlbäck of Espoo, Finland; daughter Jennifer L. Anderson and son-in-law Rick Stattler of New York; elder son Erik P. Anderson and daughter-in-law Tove Anderson of London, England; daughter-in-law Rachel Pearce Anderson of Seattle; and beloved grandchildren-Stefan, Nina, Ben, Max, and William.

May her memory ever be a blessing.

Tribute Wall

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“ My heartfelt condolences to the Anderson family upon the death of Mrs. Anderson. She was a lovely person with remarkable talents! I praise God that she used her gifts well! Love and prayers, Amy May Snider

Amy Snider - March 05, 2023 at 07:04 PM



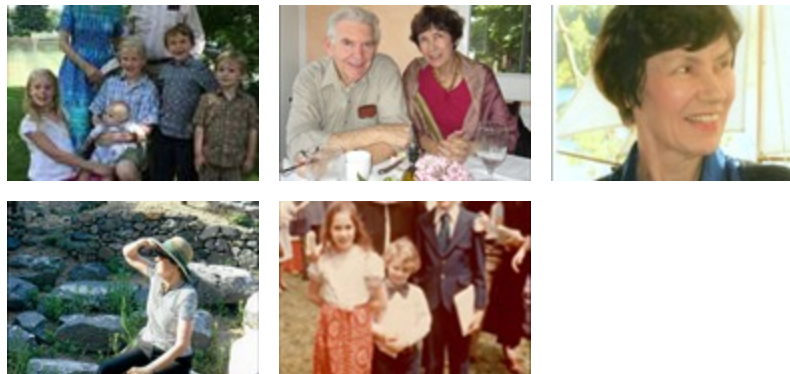
“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Sellers Funeral Home & Cremation Services - February 28, 2023 at 08:31 AM



“ 9 files added to the album Memories Album



Sellers Funeral Home & Cremation Services - February 27, 2023 at 11:10 AM