

Nancy Mel Obituary

Nancy Shenon Mel

Nancy Shenon Mel died on July 8 at the age of 91, after a long and fulfilling life. A 4th generation native of Berkeley, she was born on March 16, 1926 to Marian Woolsey and Fred Shenon. Her Woolsey great-grandparents were founding members of the First Congregational Church of Berkeley. Nancy attended John Muir Elementary, Willard Junior High, and Berkeley High School, then UC Berkeley, where she was a member of Pi Beta Phi. Postgraduate, she earned a Teaching Credential at Cal, then taught elementary school in Berkeley, Modesto, and Albany, CA, until the birth of her first child, Amelie, in 1950.

In June 1949, Nancy married the love of her life,

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and friends, and included Nancy's volunteer and community work in Berkeley and Bordeaux, France. With Howard's Fulbright fellowship in 1953, the young family moved to Brussels, Belgium for 18 months. This was the first of many adventures in Europe and beyond, including three sabbatical years living in and near Paris, plus Nancy's three-year stint as unofficial co—director to Howard's Study Abroad directorship of UC Centers in Bordeaux, Pau, and Poitiers. Mastering the French language along the way, Nancy immersed herself in French culture and literature.

Nancy was an extraordinarily gentle, patient and dedicated mother to her three children (Stephanie, b. 1957, Bartlett b. 1960). She was always supportive of their choices and very proud of their achievements. She was also spontaneous and fun. Many years ago the family was driving to Tahoe, where Nancy loved to spend summers with her

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lungs and swaying to the music of Saturday Night Fever. She could laugh at herself, and her understated sense of humor and quick wit could brighten any room.

Nancy was also a beloved sister to her brother Dr. Peter Shenon, aunt to many nieces & nephews, and she thrived on a wide circle of friends, including being an active member of Town and Gown in Berkeley for 50 years where she acted in numerous plays. She was also a member of the Drama, French, and Adventure Section Clubs of UC Berkeley. In quiet moments she loved to read.

Nancy had an extraordinary lifelong partnership with Howard Mel, a UC Berkeley professor of Biophysics, Emeritus. Side-by-side they climbed peaks in the Sierra on many trips, navigated the trails of Bhutan and the "Stans" of Central Asia, traveled east to west on the Trans-Siberian

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Symphony, Berkeley Symphony, Berkeley Rep, Aurora Theater and Pacific Mozart Ensemble. They were rarely apart in recent years.

Nancy is survived by husband Howard, her three children Amelie (John Stenzel) of Berkeley, Stephanie (Partho Ghosh) of San Diego, and Bartlett (Maria Carreira) of Manhattan Beach, CA, and 7 grandchildren (ages 15 – 22). A celebration of life gathering is being planned for the Fall.

Memorial contributions may be directed to any of the following organizations: Town and Gown Reserve Fund, Attn: Assistant Treasurer, 2401 Dwight Way, Berkeley, CA 94704; Cal Performances Annual Fund, Development Office, 101 Zellerbach Hall #4800, Berkeley, CA 94720-4800 or online at <http://calperformances.org>; Choice Magazine Listening, 85 Channel Drive, Port Washington, NY 11050.

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The following is a list of the organizations that have received contributions.