



Carolyn Coulter Gibson

October 10, 1928 - February 25, 2018

Carolyn Coulter Gibson, born to David Campbell Gibson and Leslie Albaugh Gibson on October 10, 1928, died on February 25, 2018, in the good care of the fine folks at Aldersgate Village and attended by Great Lakes Caring Hospice. Known as “Carol” to her family, Carolyn grew up in Baltimore, Maryland. Her career as a psychiatric nurse at the Menninger Foundation brought her to Topeka.

Following her attorney father’s career as a Madison Avenue advertising executive, Carolyn’s family moved in her senior year of high school. She graduated from Scarsdale High School in 1946. She graduated from Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio, in 1950, majoring in psychology and piano. On advice from her father to learn “something she could fall back on” she went on to study nursing at Columbia University School of Nursing on the campus of the New York Presbyterian Hospital, graduating in 1953. When Carolyn came to Menninger, it was to participate in the USA’s only course in psychiatric nursing at the time. She worked at Menninger and at Stormont-Vail Hospital until she retired in 1992.

A lifelong musician, with her mother as her accompanist, Carolyn began violin studies at age five, studying with the First Violinist of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. She described a childhood of exercises in the finer points of music like harmony and [playing by] ear training. She said she loved studying music

because “it’s all well-organized and filled with rules, but creative, too.” In her years in Topeka, she studied piano seriously with Virginia Wallace and Elizabeth Hastings. She sang in the Grace Episcopal Choir for many years. After retirement, she studied the accordion with Betty Jo Simon and harmonica with a Kansas City teacher. Even at Aldersgate, she enjoyed practicing her piano skills on a keyboard in her room and harmonica with an online teacher. In the end, if she wasn’t watching Fox News, she was studying the details about each piece playing on Cox’s Light Classical music station. She wrote sweet email messages to friends about the music she heard on various days. She called music “the happy side” of her life.

Carolyn said that the most exciting experience of her life was founding a successful business when the first Macintosh computers and laser printers were available in 1984. She was proud of her title as a Mac Pioneer. She founded Bookberry Press creating and producing signs, newsletters, and bookmarks. Her job title was CEO/advertising/printer/sales rep. She hired a professional artist who helped with design, and she made daily visits to Sam Carkhuff’s computer store to enlist his help in technical skills. She said that the constant creative thinking required was a thrill. She called it a true growth experience, and Carolyn Gibson was a woman who treasured personal growth throughout her life. She maintained her career as a nurse simultaneously until her desktop publishing business got so big that she had to choose one or the other. She chose nursing, but she made laminated bookmarks for friends for the rest of her life.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents, her older sister Mary Alden Gibson Welling and her brother David Campbell Gibson, Junior.

Nieces and nephews Carol Leslie Welling McVeigh, Barbara Alden Gibson Parise, Thomas Bradley Gibson and David C. Gibson III survive.

All of the words above are those Carolyn asked to have included in her obituary. Her friends remember her unflappable good cheer, her hungry mind, her can-do spirit, her calm about her well-being even in the face of death. She was always surprised (and pleased) to hear compliments on those traits she took for granted.

In her final years, in her never-ending pursuit of activities to flex her creative intellect, Carolyn took poetry writing classes. At age 88-89, she called her newfound stimulation in writing poems “mental stretches”. She loved words. She didn’t mind being silly just for the fun of it. Her friends would like to share one of her happy little poems with you here:

LOVE

It’s never too late
To fall in love.
As it always comes down
Straight from above.

Be it a man or
Be it a woman,
Or a fat kitty cat
Asleep on your lap.

You simply show
An additional glow
When love takes its toll
On yourself as a whole.

On Carolyn’s request, there will be a bouquet of yellow and orange flowers at her memorial service. Never married and with no children, with her family

living far away throughout her adult life, Carolyn loved her pets with all of her considerable heart. She never met a cat or a dog that didn't charm her. In lieu of more flowers, memorial gifts to Topeka's Helping Hands Humane Society at 5720 SW 21st Street, Topeka KS 66604, might seem appropriate.

Carolyn donated her body to the University of Kansas School of Medicine. Friends will gather to share memories of Carolyn and music at 1 p.m. on Friday, March 9, in the Aldersgate Village Wesley Hall in Manchester Hall with her friend Wolfgang Simon officiating.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

MAR 9. 1:00 PM (CT)

Aldersgate Village
7220 SW Asbury Drive
Topeka, KS 66614

Tribute Wall



“ *Carolyn Coulter Gibson*

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Carolyn was an inpatient psychiatric nurse for the Menninger Adult Hospital on the East Campus when I first met her as a clinical psychology post doc.in 1966-68. She was compassionate but also clear thinking, cheerful, spirited, dedicated and devoted to our patients. She was a real team player as we supported each other in work that was at times quite challenging. She was fully involved in our best efforts to help our patients.as we carried forward the Menninger tradition to be deeply compassionate, supportive and growth facilitating. She has left us with memories to be treasured.*

Siebolt 'Sid' Frieswyk PhD - March 04, 2018 at 04:08 PM