

Ruth's Story - Her Bequest

Ruth loved being alive. She was active and “very in the moment,” remembers her longtime partner, Elfie. She enjoyed good company and had many varied interests, but when it came time to focus, she did that too. Because she did, the Howe Library will forever remember Ruth Sylvester as a one of its most steadfast patrons.

Ruth’s different vocations throughout her life included farming, computer technology, hospitality, and substitute teaching. From early on, she was adventurous and loved traveling across the United States and throughout Europe and Africa. She thrived in the out-of-doors and enjoyed breaking trails with friends through the snowbound wilderness of British Columbia. She volunteered as a board member of the Hanover Food Co-op and as a driver for Meals on Wheels in the Upper Valley.

She also loved music and, in adulthood, folk dancing. Local residents fondly remember Ruth as an accomplished dance caller and cellist. For years, she served on the board of the Upper Valley Music Center.

Perhaps most of all, Ruth loved words and language. She had majored in classics at Bryn Mawr College, but it wasn't until later in her life that she focused on freelance writing and editing. She edited several books by local authors and wrote extensively for local newspapers.

Not surprisingly, Ruth also loved books and reading and considered the Howe Library one of her favorite places. She knew most of the librarians by name and thought of the library as one of Hanover's greatest assets. She would often check out books for pleasure and research only to return them many days late, which gave her the opportunity to happily pay numerous late fees that she considered to be gifts to the Howe Library.

Toward the end of her life, after she learned that she had contracted a terminal disease, Ruth wanted to do something good for the community that was her home. In her will, she left a generous bequest to that institution that had meant so much to her over the years, the Howe Library. As her partner, Elfie, recalled, knowing what her gift would support after she was gone pleased Ruth very much.

Thank you, Ruth, for remembering the Howe with your generous and meaningful gift.