



## Ann Latham Daum

November 19, 2021

It saddens us to report that our mother, Ann Latham Daum, died on Friday, November 19th at the Miriam Hospital in Providence. We were both by her side for the last few hours to the end. Those of you who met Ann know she was a complicated woman: it wasn't just the flaming red hair that lent an easy comparison to Lucille Ball. We look back on our childhoods and the words wacky and madcap come to mind, fitting for a woman whose birthday was April Fool's Day. Like Lucille Ball, she could be opinionated, obstinate, and fiery. Yet in a crisis, she could act quickly with resolve as the professionalism of her nursing career swung into action.

Her parents were devoted to one another and she claimed to have felt like the third wheel in their marriage. She told us that throughout her childhood she was a dreamy kid often left to her own devices. An only child, like our father, she was the last of several ancient Connecticut families on her Father's side and the granddaughter of Swedish immigrants on her Mother's. Her parents struggled through the Depression as they moved from Connecticut to Kew Gardens in Queens, then to Germantown in Philadelphia, and eventually back to Norwichtown, Connecticut where her parents opened a restaurant. While a high-school student at the Norwich Free Academy, her love of art was nurtured and she dreamed of attending art school. But practicality and the offer of college tuition from her mother's brother, Ernest W. Seaholm, sent her to Simmons College in Boston where she received a Bachelor's degree in nursing in the aftermath of the Second World War. While a student at

Simmons, she met her future husband, Stanley Daum, then a medical student.

Ann and Stan were married in 1948 in New London, Connecticut. They spent the first years of their marriage in a fourth-floor walk-up near North Station in Boston while Ann worked at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, and Stanley interned at Boston City Hospital. Ann later worked at MacLean Hospital. Our father was called up to serve as an Air Force physician during the Korean War. While he was stationed at Westover Air Force Base in Springfield, Massachusetts, Susan was born in the same city as her mother and grandmother. After a brief period in Texas at the Veteran's Hospital in McKinney, they eventually settled in Providence where Eric was born. During the early years of motherhood, she was a devoted if somewhat discombobulated companion, at turns distracted or nurturing, yet always fun to be with.

Once she returned to work, she was a visiting nurse in Providence, an instructor at the Rhode Island Hospital School Nursing, and the director of the health service at the Rhode Island School of Design. At 50, she returned to school to pursue a Master's Degree in Adult Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing at Boston College. The next phase of her career saw her working as the administrator of admissions at Butler Hospital in Providence, a therapist at Pawtucket Mental Health, Executive Director of Island Hospice in Newport, Rhode Island, and for ten years as a Psychiatric Liaison Nurse Clinical Specialist at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence.

Following her retirement, she threw herself into a long-delayed career as an artist. She treated it like a full-time job, joining and exhibiting at the Providence Art Club, and winning "Best in Show" at the Newport Art Museum juried exhibition in 2010, which led to a solo show in 2012 at the gallery. Her work had recently been accepted into a nationally juried show at the Attleboro Arts Museum, and she exhibited regularly at the South County Arts Association, Pawtucket Arts Collaborative, and the Wickford Art Association. Her great skill as a portraitist was due to her keen observational eye, her deft

hand, and the rigor of her psychiatric training. She claimed that she saw drawing as an insight into the souls of her subjects and she often strove to convey deeply emotional issues within her art.

We suspect, however, our father was a bit dismayed by this new career, having looked forward to spending more time with his wife rather than being relegated to the role of studio assistant and gopher. But he happily supported her and was her greatest advocate.

Ann was an active member of the First Unitarian Church in Providence, and fiercely proud of her Alma Mater, Simmons College. She was diagnosed with Celiac disease in her 50s and became an advocate for Celiac awareness. She had a keen intellect, was an avid reader, especially of Russian Novels and the of the history of the Second World War. She shared her love of music with both her children and the stereo in the house at Strathmore Road was usually blasting one of her great loves; either torch songs from the Great American Songbook or Baroque trumpet concerti. She had an absurdist's sense of humor, and seemed to find something to laugh at in even the most serious moments.

After our father's death, she moved out of the big old house in Edgewood to an apartment in Providence, insisting upon her independence to the end. Many words come to mind about her last years. Her resilience after two terrible falls, the first leading to a broken neck and the second shattering both scapulae. In each case, we were told to expect the worst, but her fierce determination got her back on her feet months before the doctors' most optimistic projections. She was tenacious, brazen, stubborn, prone to speaking her mind bluntly without concern for others' feelings, yet also kind and generous, and able to laser in on the issue at the heart of your trouble, often when you didn't want to hear it. Her hearing loss toward the end of her life was especially difficult for her as it distanced her from her many friends with whom she loved to speak and it silenced her great love of music. To the end, she remained deeply devoted to our father, Stan, claiming she

could still feel his loving presence in her life. She is survived by her daughter, Susan Gardiner Daum of Attleboro, Massachusetts, her son, Eric Inman Daum, and daughter-in-law Beth Niemi of Andover, Massachusetts, and grandson, Karl Eero Daum of Oakland, California.

Annie and Stanny are sharing an urn now. We bet our father is already longing for a little quiet.

A memorial celebration will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Ann's memory to Crossroads, <https://www.crossroadsri.org/>

# Tribute Wall

ED

“ 12 files added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Eric Daum** - December 10, 2021 at 07:36 AM

SD

“ Ours is a small family. We are two children whose parents were both only children so we missed out on the joys of having uncles, cousins and aunts surround us at every holiday and life event, good or bad.



What we did gain throughout our lives, was a much larger family made up of friends that our mother so easily made from every walk of life. She was outgoing, involved and someone you would like to have on your side because she was so good at getting things done. Our family became part of a much larger extended family at the Unitarian church, one of the oldest in the country.

Her love of art, books, cooking, the New York Times, and music coupled with her education in psychiatric nursing gave her a well-rounded view of life.

My special memory is of her standing in front of her easel overlooking Nauset Beach in Orleans, MA, creating one of her many landscapes in pastel.

In honor of her desire to show her work when she could, on the morning after her death, I posthumously entered two of her works into the Attleboro Arts Museum Member's show.

She had wanted me to help her fill out the forms and bring her pieces to the gallery.

It made sense that I do it to share one last time, a show that both of us had work.

I will miss her.

Should you find the time and the inclination, you can visit Attleboro Arts Museum during the month of December 2021. It opens officially on Dec 11th.

<https://attleboroartsmuseum.org/members-exhibition-2/>

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Susan Gardiner Daum - December 09, 2021 at 02:41 PM