

In Memory: Eleanor (Jessamae Duttweiler) Stubbs, 1919-2012



It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Eleanor Stubbs. She was born in Menominee, Michigan, on July 26, 1919, the first of two daughters to the Rev. Herbert E. Duttweiler and Lydia Sperling Duttweiler. She grew up in southern Michigan where her father served churches in many different towns. She

attended Michigan State University, where she earned a B.S. degree in home economics in 1941. She met Art (Arthur Leisk Stubbs) at church camp, and they were married on March 19, 1943, in Marysville, Michigan. Art, her husband for 59 ½ years, preceded her in death in 2002.

During World War II they set up housekeeping in Green Bay, Wisconsin, where Art was an Ensign in the Coast Guard. After the war, they returned to Alpena, Michigan. In 1949, they moved to the Los Angeles area, where they started a family and Art worked for the U.S. Postal Service. From 1960 to 1969, Eleanor taught home economics and sponsored the Athenas Service Club at South High School in Torrance, California. In 1965, she earned a M.A. in home economics from Long Beach State College. The family then moved to Oregon where Eleanor became head of the Home Economics Department at Clackamas Community College, until she retired in 1981.

In 1976, they created Stubbs Shrubs, which specialized in growing evergreen azaleas in the Willamette area of West Linn. What started with a single, eight by ten greenhouse became a booming business with six huge greenhouses. Without the benefit of regular help, they annually propagated 60,000 cuttings of more than 500 varieties—always with an eye for the less well known ones, as evidenced by the informative catalog they produced. Ever the collector, Eleanor remarked, “Plant nuts like us have to have one of every kind.” They were “particularly interested in the low, compact, varieties—those which make the lovely hanging bas-

kets, the interesting container plants, and ones that give that splash of color in today’s smaller gardens.” While considering themselves a wholesale operation, they enjoyed the opportunity to meet people that retail sales made possible. They were particularly gratified that orders from Australia, Holland, England, Italy, and India were not uncommon.

They were both active volunteers at Crystal Springs Gardens, the site of many sponsored activities of the Portland Chapter of the ARS. Eleanor was a consultant on the *Sunset Western Garden Book* and *The Pacific Coast Rhododendron Story*, a member of the Oregon Association of Nurserymen, a past president of the Portland Chapter, ARS, and past president of the Northwest Chapter of the ASA.

Art and Eleanor liked to travel, making friends wherever they went. I first met Eleanor on one of her trips east, as a consequence of our both being officials in the ASA. We sat across the table from each other through many ASA Board meetings. I recall an occasion when Eleanor had been talked into giving a presentation and desperately needed slides. It turned out that I had a lot of slides that she needed, and I was very happy to be able to help her. While they liked to travel, they were also great hosts. Janet and I visited them on our way to the ASA meeting in Portland in 1987, and it was there that Eleanor introduced me to pineapple on pizza—a never to be repeated experience. In 1988, we saw Eleanor again when she came through Bethesda on her way to visit family in Florida. All too soon, however, the demands of old age made getting around more difficult and travel became out of the question. Over the last several years, our keeping in touch was reduced to the exchange of newsy Christmas cards. Despite the many challenges of getting older, she always remained very positive, and it was very obvious that a source of great comfort to Eleanor was that she had family near.

The following statement appeared in the memorial service program: “Eleanor accomplished much in her 93 years. Eleanor was a capable educator, active church volunteer, and a rock to her family.”—a terse but fitting epitaph.

William C. Miller III
Bethesda, Maryland