

## Miriam Fern (Goodwin) Wood



Miriam “Mim” (Goodwin) Wood, age 91, passed away on May 17, 2021, surrounded by her family. Born to Earnest Manly and Blanche Pauline (Jackson) Goodwin, Mim lived most of her life in central Ohio. She graduated from Columbus South High School in 1947, and studied history at Capital University, earning a Bachelors’ Degree in 1951. Also in 1951, Mim married Richard A. “Dick” Wood, a union which lasted 50 years until his death, producing a lifetime of fond memories, four children and seven grandchildren.

As a young girl, Mim took rides in the country and was enchanted by covered bridges. This early interest in historic structures set the stage for her life’s vocation, working to record and preserve these pieces of history. Mim was the foremost expert in Ohio covered bridge history, with her lifelong devotion creating a body of work which is now in the archives of the Ohio History Center. She was a charter member of the Ohio Historic Bridge Association and served

in leadership positions, including newsletter editor. She contributed articles on covered bridges to numerous publications, and authored “The Covered Bridges of Ohio, an Atlas and History” in 1993, and co-authored “Covered Bridges: Ohio, Kentucky & West Virginia” in 2007. She also edited her husband’s WWII history book, “War Stories of the O&W.”

Her life’s work led directly to preserving part of Ohio’s history which would have otherwise been lost to technological progress. In the 1970s, her research placed scores of Ohio bridges on the National Register of Historic Places. If you are fortunate enough to see a covered bridge—or better yet, have your children play in the streams beneath—some credit should go to Mim. In 1989, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office recognized her contributions with their Public Education and Awareness Award. On her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, Governor Ted Strickland issued a proclamation to honor her lifetime achievements in Ohio historic preservation.

Mim’s story is not complete without mention of her adventures with Dick Wood, who she affectionately referred to as “Dawg,” as she was his “Caht.” Nearly every weekend included road trips to Ohio historical sites such as historic bridges, iron furnaces, and state parks, with four kids in tow. Later, their lives were further enriched by visiting with grandchildren close to home, in Ashland, Ohio, or in Boston, Massachusetts.

Beyond her devotion to covered bridges, Mim was an avid gardener and quilt maker. Residing on the hilltop area of Columbus, her massive flower garden was alive with color every spring through summer. She made quilts for family members’ special occasions, and volunteered for many years at Mount Carmel Medical Center.

Mim was preceded in death by her parents and husband. She is survived by children Charlotte (Donald Rodgers) of Lee, MA., Heidi (Gary Weller) of Jeromesville, OH., Richard E. (Karen Belt) Wood of Powell, OH, and Howard P. (Kristin Klocinski) Wood of Dublin, OH; grandchildren, Beth Rodgers; Andy and Ben (Tiffany Urig) Weller; Austin and Katy Wood; and Olivia and Grace Wood; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Since 2014, Mim convalesced in the supportive environs of Glenwood Alzheimer's Center, where staff truly loved their "Mim-sy." The immediate family will hold a private graveside service, with an event to celebrate Mim's life to be announced later. For any memorial gifts, please consider the Alzheimer's Association.

Her body is now free of that disease, and her children imagine a family reunion on a front porch in McArthur, Ohio, with their favorite overly-sweet wine, laughter and storytelling. And then later, on some dusty backroad, "Caht" and "Dawg" are together again, driving off the beaten path in search of long-abandoned covered bridges.

