

Linda Wesley



A BEAUTIFUL LIFE
HAS BEEN LIVED

In celebration and
remembrance
for all the love and
adventures we have
shared.

The love we have
shared together
binds our hearts
now forever.



December 11, 1947 -
September 29, 2017

Remembrance

In Loving Memory

My thanks to all of you coming today. This is been a very difficult time for me to lose my best friend and life partner of 40+ years and I will see if that I can make it through this service, but if I can't, which I suspected that will happen, I will turn it over to our Chaplin Linda Cherry.

I want to thank you all so very much for your friendship and support. It is also comforting to know that Linda touched so many lives.

The Darkling Thrush

By Thomas Hardy, 1840 - 1928

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse ouleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervouless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

Background Information on Linda

Linda was born Linda Ann Tydell on December 11, 1947 in San Francisco to Ernest and Martha Tydell who had immigrated to the United States from Sweden in the early 1920s.

Linda was a surprise change of life baby her mother was in her early 40's when Linda was born, and her father was in his late 40's. Linda's older brother Ernie was 18 when she was born and Linda's sister, Marian, was 12.

Linda initial grew up in the neighborhood of Vernal Heights close to the shipyards where her father worked as a welder as a civilian employee of the Navy. As the family prospered they eventually were able to purchase a home in Daly City where she spent most of her childhood.

Linda did very well in school and was actually skipped a grade, the eighth grade. While she did well academically the social challenges entering high school as a freshman at such a young age were daunting. Linda was very fortunate, and a group of older kids took her under their wing and into their group many of them becoming lifelong friends. They hung out together during high school and beyond.

After graduating high school Linda moved away from home into an apartment that she shared with Pat and Nancy and some other friends and she took a job as a file clerk at Pacific Bell. She found the work to be incredibly boring and uninteresting. Her family did not encourage her to attend college that was something that other people did, not the Tydells. Especially not the girls. They wanted her to go to secretarial school instead, but during a doctor's visit at Kaiser hospital her doctor asked her what she was doing, and she explained that she was looking for a job. The doctor then said that they were in need of a medical assistant. From that she went to San Mateo community college and obtained the credential she needed to work as a medical assistant for Kaiser Permanente where she worked for quite some time.

At some point soon after, she went on a date with a boyfriend and another couple. The conversation at dinner revolved around literature and other intellectual topics that Linda wasn't familiar with. She felt very out of place and embarrassed and from that experience she became determined to improve her education. She made arrangements with Kaiser to work part time and attend San Francisco State as a part time student.

Linda became fascinated with English literature which became her major and continuing love for life of the works of Hardy, Conrad and many, many more. After obtaining her bachelor's degree in English Lit she continued on another year and got her teaching credential.

Linda has 1 niece, Karen, and 2 nephews, Mark Tydell and David Millar.

Linda grew up with very close girlfriends that remain friends to this day: Nancy, Pat, Chris and Ruth. Dianne was Linda's college girlfriend and remained close to the end as well.



Linda & Martin's Wedding

Linda married Martin Wesley in June 17, 1978.

Linda worked from 1977 to 2008 at Sunreach School which morphed into Sierra School where she became the Principal.

In Linda's retirement she spent significant time dealing with multiple health issues: pancreatic infections, back surgery, 2 heart operations, breathing issues, lung

disease, and fought severe genetic anxiety disorder/depression. Linda's mother and her sister also suffered from severe anxiety and depression. Linda became more reclusive, as her illness progressed, but always made time for her close friends, visiting and chatting on the phone, sharing memories.

Linda had a deep love of dogs for over a 60 year span. Through her adult life her dogs were most important companions. She would want to acknowledge her dogs, many of you knew all of them. Toby a West Highland White Terrier; Mollie “the” Collie; Greta, a Schnauzer; Buffy a Terrier mix; Watson, a Clumber Spaniel; Sophie, Jack and Elizabeth, Tibetan Terriers; Nora, a Westie; Holly, a Tibetan Terrier; Tavish, a Scotty; Lily a Westie; and most recently Dylan, a Scotty and Chloe a Westie,



Her most treasured breed were her Westies. It is often thought, that being attracted to a certain breed of dog, indicates ones own compatible personality traits. Terriers are tenacious, strong willed, loving, sensitive, cheerful, persistent, very dedicated and loyal. Linda had these traits to varying degrees, along with a generous heart and infinite kindness. Linda’s dogs gave her incredible comfort and she loved having her dogs cuddling with her while she was ill. “Dogs may not be ones whole life, but they make ones life whole”...a quote that someone once said.

Linda loved classical music, opera, Joan Baez, Adele, Enya, and she always felt a kinship to the opera, La Traviata.

My Best Friend by Madison Wesley

It seems that, so few are fortunate enough to have what I did with Linda. Best friend. Spouse. Life partner. Even fewer to have had it for so long. Over 40 years.

We were introduced by friends in February of 1977. It took me awhile to work up the courage to ask her out, but she was so beautiful and wonderful I finally managed it. Over that spring the dating became a full blown, wonderful romance.

But Linda had plans for the summer. She had enrolled in a English lit program at Oxford and would be gone for about 9 weeks. At this point I was completely in love but she was not so sure and not willing to make any commitments until she returned. This left me anxious and bereft.

It being an age before email, cell phones, or text messaging, I hand wrote her about two love letters a week. And she wrote back! It was during those weeks of separation and the exchanging of letters that our relationship really solidified. Shortly after she returned we reunited and I moved into her apartment since I was there most of the time anyways.

So, our long life together began, hardly every separated during all that time. So many things shared. So much love exchanged. So often we cared for each other and held one another up. So many arguments resolved. So many celebrations. I have no words or time to really communicate it all.

The biggest challenge and Linda's biggest gift to me came at the end. In the late summer of 2015 my gender dysphoria peaked and I finally broke. I told Linda that



Linda 1979

I had to transition and, while she had known that I was transgender, it was a huge shock for her.

It was the most difficult time in our relationship but like all the other hardships we had faced, we face it together. Worked our way through it day by day, issue by issue.

By mid-January 2016 I had transitioned full time and Linda began to see that Madison was a much, much happier person. In May of 2016 and again in 2017 we attended the Esprit Conference and participated in the Significant Other program. There we found knowledge, support and many friends. Being able to share what we were experiencing with other couples and learn from their experience was life changing for both Linda and I.

Linda continued to stand by me and support me in the day-to-day and in the major decisions even as her own health slowly declined. Gender Confirmation Surgery was scheduled for September 20, 2017. After many preparations to make sure Linda would have all the care she needed, I headed to Bangkok.

While I was gone Linda's respiratory condition abruptly worsened and she was hospitalized. The treatment was working, and she was recovering. She spoke by phone with her old friend on the 28th and Helynna Brooke sat with her and as she had dinner that evening. She was scheduled to transfer out of the hospital into a skilled nursing facility on September 29th but unexpectedly passed away in her sleep early in the morning.

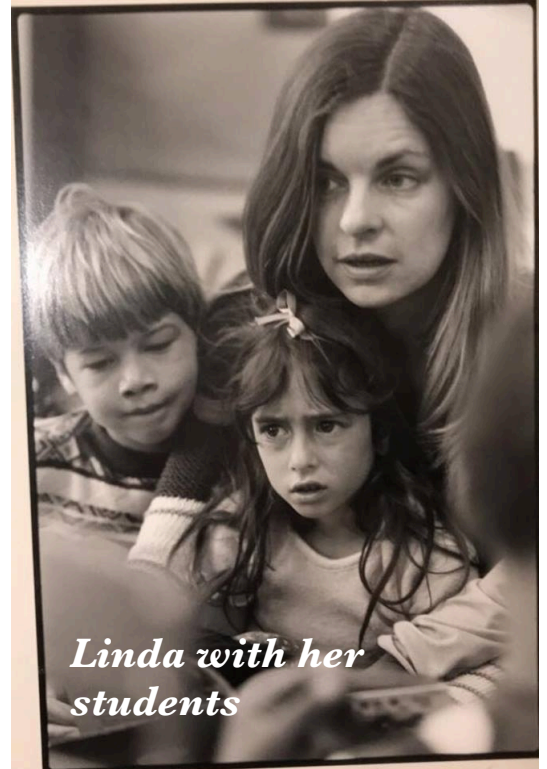
I received a call from the head nurse about 10:30PM 10,000 miles away in Bangkok, that the love of my life was gone. It was so devastating on so many levels but to have a partnership of over 14,000 days spent together end after not having seen each other for two weeks was especially bitter.

“Some broken hearts will never mend
Some memories will never end
Some tears will never dry
My love for you will never die.”

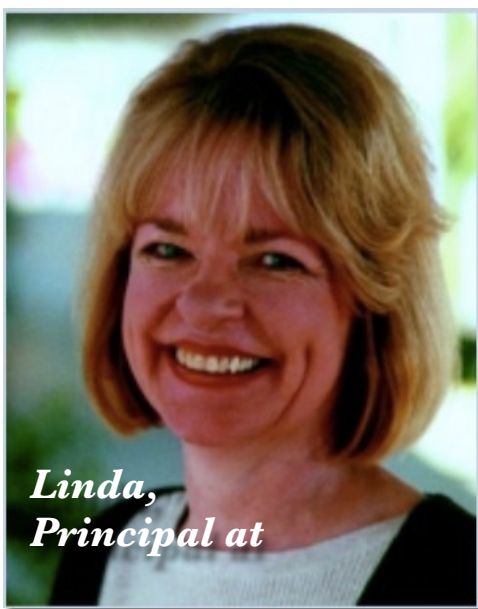
Dianne's Friendship with Linda

Linda has been my best friend since college, about a hundreds years ago, or so it seems. I want to share with you some background on Linda and some thoughts I have about life and death. I am also including some of her friends photos and their thoughts about Linda.”

I met Linda when we were in college at San Francisco State University. We were both English majors and were also enrolled in the teaching program. We were in many of the same classes. We shared backpacking adventures, went mountain climbing, motorcycling with our boyfriends and socialized lots for many years. While we were in college, Linda worked at Kaiser hospital. One of the things I remember was that we used to embroider while taking notes in some of the lecture classes, as many of the classes seemed so boring at the time and it kept us occupied.



Linda with her students



*Linda,
Principal at*

Toward the end of the school teaching program, Linda was short just one class, required for her teaching certificate. Without this class, she would have to wait until next fall to complete the course in order to start a teaching job. I had taken all my classes and we discussed the idea that I would take the class for her, as “Linda”. We were almost inseparable, so we thought no one would really notice. So when I took a Physical Education for Children class as “Linda”, other classmates apologized for mixing up my name with “Dianne”. We never told anyone what we had done. I promised Linda that I would get her at least a “C”

in this class, turned out I got Linda a “B”. It was a dumb class, in my opinion. Had we been caught, we both would have lost our teaching credentials. I guess we did this, just to see if we could get away with it and to be able to tell the story when we were old.

After graduation, I was hired at a private school. They only had an opening for a kindergarten teacher. On the day of my job acceptance, I brought Linda with me to my job interview and implored them to hire Linda instead of me and requested that I be hired for the jr. high school position, should it become available in the future. Linda took “my” job and over the years became principal, where she eventually retired. I was hired as the jr. high teacher the following year and stayed 2-3 years..... and later quit teaching lower grades.

I attended Linda’s wedding, but afterwards lost touch for quite a few years. In 1989 I had built my house at Sea Ranch and rekindled our friendship. By then I had 2 standard poodles and visited with Linda at their home in San Jose, where I previously lived for a few years before Linda & Madison bought the home on Richland Avenue.



***Photo by Madison
of Yogi, Dianne,
Iona circa 1989***



***Photo by Madison Sea
Ranch House 1989***

I introduced Linda & Madison (to my then new love, (now of 25 years), John, and we started sharing vacations, holidays and celebrations such as the Nutcracker ballet etc, and at Sea Ranch from 1989-2004. We shared lots of love, cooking extravaganzas, champagne toasts with lots of laughs, and deep conversations, all creating many memories. In 2004 John & I moved to New Mexico and kept

in touch by phone, but long distance friendships miss out on the daily events and it was not the same. Our bond was still there, but we were not able to spend time

together in person. We shared a love of dogs, sewing, our Dickens villages, cooking, photography, and a deep friendship that the 4 of us treasured.

Lots of changes took place from 2004 to the present and we remained close, yet lived far apart. Gone were the shared dinners and celebrations, but we kept in touch via phone calls.

Late summer of 2017, there was a coordinated plan in place to care for Linda while Madison was away in Bangkok. Linda's high school friends, Pat & Nancy, were covering the first 5 days of Madison's journey away in late September. Others were covering days in between. I was to come for 10 days in the end of the first week of October. I spoke by phone with Linda daily during Madison's absence. Some days were more complicated than others with hospital stays and other days were filled with lucid and heart warming conversations.

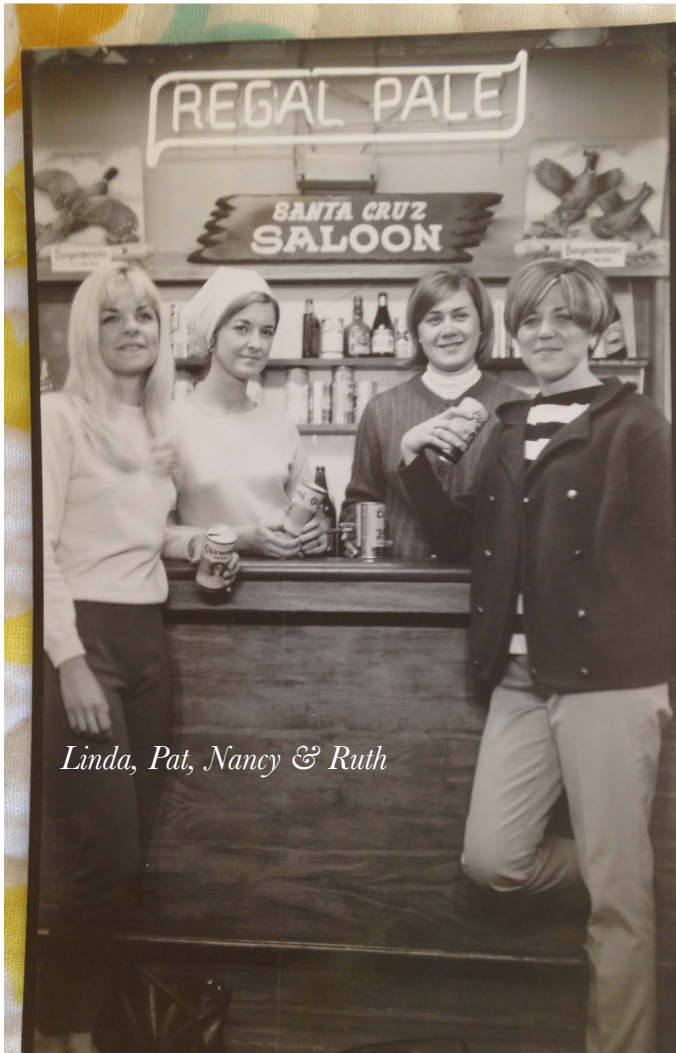
The night before she passed, we spoke by phone for 33 minutes. It was the most heart warming conversation we shared in a long while. We talked about the past history we shared, our mates, our lives, our dogs. We discussed the sorrows and the celebrations we shared and the times in between. We talked about sewing, shopping, friendships and our affection for one another. I was to come up the following week and Linda said she was really looking forward to spending time together. We were planning meals that we would share and things we would do while she was recuperating. The 4 of us planned on celebrating Thanksgiving in this coming November, cooking all our favorite foods, including the infamous California onion dip, that we ate many years back.

That was the last time I spoke with Linda as she died in her sleep the following early morning. I grieve for the time I was not able to spend with her, but I recognize that it must be her time to pass and that her suffering has ended. I will miss you forever, Linda. You will not be forgotten. And we promise to look after Madison for you."

~ Dianne McKenzie



Old Friends:



Linda, Pat, Nancy & Ruth

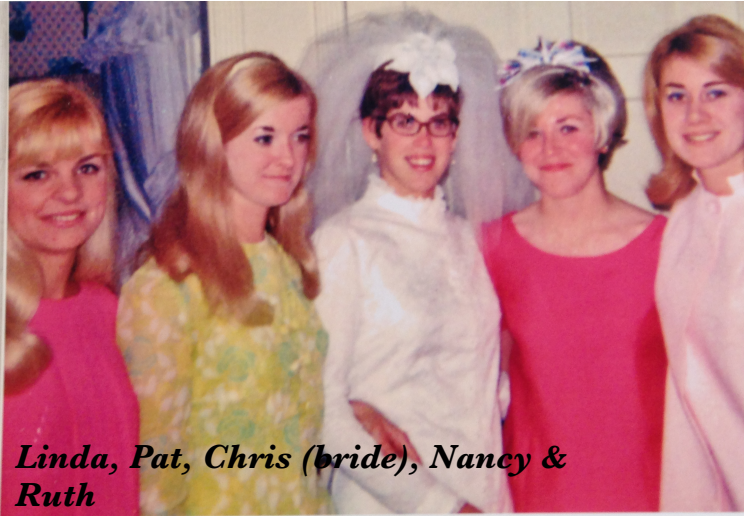
"I have known Linda since we were young girls in middle school. We went to high school together and were just best friends!"

"There was a group of us that were all just like sisters. We had so much fun together!"

"Over the years, we always stayed in touch making it an annual event to get together for lunch or weekends away. These were very special times."

"It was very hard when she moved out of state but the friendship continued. I was so very fortunate to see her just days before she passed away. She was so ill but still had the same smile and warm heart. She was a lovely person that was so dear to me and I will miss her terribly."

~ Pat Dunton (Beardsley)



Linda, Pat, Chris (bride), Nancy & Ruth

"Linda and I shared old times when I was there recently and she was lucid. I loved her, she was a lovely person, her mother and my mother, both being from Scandinavia were good friends and I will cherish my memory of her forever!"

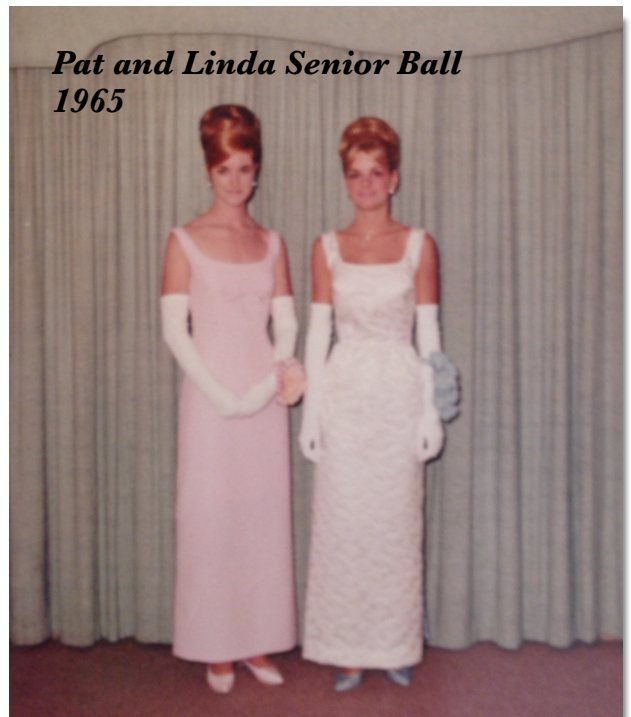
We laughed about our trip to New York before we were married and so many other good times. It was difficult to watch the decline of a good friend."
~Nancy Johnson

Photos from Linda's early pre college years

Her best friends from grade school have been part of her life up to the present. Linda valued her friendships with people and was a loyal friend.



Nancy, Chris, Pat & Linda



Pat and Linda Senior Ball 1965

Linda Wesley at Sierra School

“During her years at Sierra School, Linda Wesley changed many lives for the better. She served as a classroom teacher and also as the director of the school. Sierra’s students often had challenges that made its small classes not just helpful, but necessary, in order for them to learn. These challenges ranged from blindness through non-English speakers with no local parents, through dyslexia and ADHD to Aspergers Syndrome. This last was most challenging because at the time Linda was in education, Aspergers was little known, little studied, and certainly without strategies for remediation. The curriculum Linda developed for Sierra helped all of these students because it focused on the individual’s needs and required mastery of the basics before the student could progress to more difficult work, all under very close supervision. This system also enabled average and brilliant students who attended Sierra to excel at their own pace but not lose track of their general education needs in areas that were not their strengths. As director of the school, Linda took the time to look over the work of each student, each week, and write an assessment in addition to that which was written by the teacher, so that the parents or caregivers of these children could be aware of their needs and progress. Each graduating senior and each student who left Sierra received from Linda careful and thoughtful guidance toward their next educational placement.

To do this required a level of patience, seriousness, and focus not always found in administrators. Besides this work with the students, Linda was also, frequently, training teachers who had not even had a practice-teaching opportunity before they joined the Sierra faculty. She also interfaced with parents who were often impatient, challenging, and uninformed, and a board of directors that sometimes challenged Linda’s judgement. She did all this with grace and kindness, always. Students were the focus. Many entered Sierra with low self-esteem and attitudes that made them difficult to teach. For the majority of the students, I believe, Linda enabled them to leave with pride in their success and much increased confidence and strategies for continued success.” ~ Catherine Bishop, former Sierra School Board member

New Friends



"I am blessed to have had the chance to meet Linda and get to know her sweet, kind nature and beautiful smile. I admired her greatly and I will always remember my time with her at Esprit." ~Jennifer Mohr

"I will never forget the look on Linda's face when I saw her this year at Esprit. She lit up with a gorgeous smile and gave me the warmest hug. Then we sat and had a beautiful visit. Such a beautiful woman and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and get to know her." ~Kiersten Mohr



Quotes & Poems

Artistic license has been taken from some of the following poems.

The Dash

— *by Linda Ellis*

I read of a woman who stood to speak
At the funeral of her friend.
She referred to the dates on her tombstone
From the beginning to the end.

She noted that first came the date of her birth, 1947
And spoke of the following date with tears, 2017
But she said what mattered most of all
Was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time
That she spent alive on earth
And now only those who loved her
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own,
The cars, the house, the cash,
What matters is how we live and love
And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard;
Are there things you'd like to change?
For you never know how much time is left
That can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough
To consider what's true and real
And always try to understand
The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger
And show appreciation more
And love the people in our lives
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect
And more often wear a smile,
Remembering that this special dash
Might only last a little while.

So when your eulogy is being read
With your life's actions to rehash
Would you be proud of the things they say
About how you spent your dash?





She is Gone

By David Harkins

You can shed tears that she is gone
or you can smile because she has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back
or you can open your eyes and see all she's left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see her
or you can be full of the love you shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

You can remember her and only that she's gone
or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back
or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.



“There are four questions of value in life... What is sacred? Of what is the spirit made? What is worth living for, and what is worth dying for?
The answer to each is the same. Only love.”

by Don Juan de Marco (1995)

"There exists only the present instant... a Now which always and without end is itself new. There is no yesterday nor any tomorrow, but only Now, as it was a thousand years ago and as it will be a thousand years hence.”

By Meister Eckhart



"Thus shall you think of all this fleeting world:
a star at dawn, a bubble in a stream,
a flash of lightning in a summer sky,
a flickering light, a phantom, a dream."
- from The Diamond Sutra



*Thank you all for being Linda's friend.
We will all miss her.*

Website for Memorial Remembrance: <http://diannemckenzie.com/remembrance/>