

Half Staff – Caroline “Nan” Cross Chase

February 15, 2005

Caroline C. “Nan” Chase, 84, teacher, community activist, and artist, died of cancer Feb. 15, 2005, at her home in Rockport. She spent nearly 40 years teaching art and elementary school children. She spent the last 20 years in Rockport enjoying her involvement in numerous community organizations. She was a volunteer for the Meals-on-Wheels Program, a member of the Rockport Rights of Way Committee, the Rockport Garden Club, Sandy Bay Yacht Club, and the Old Garden Beach Association. As a supporter of the Rockport Democratic Town Committee, she hosted some of their functions and events. She was an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockport, the Rockport Art Association and its community of artists, as well as the Cape Ann Symphony, Rockport Chamber Music and Rockport Play Readers.

She was born in 1920 in Brussels, Belgium, where her father, Samuel Hazard Cross, was commercial attaché, and later professor and chair of the Slavic Languages and Literature Department at Harvard University. Her mother, Constance Cross Taintor, was of Rockport.

She attended Shady Hill School, Brimmer and May, and graduated from Wellesley College in 1941. She was an active alumna of all three schools. She earned a graduate degree in education from Manhattanville College in New York. In 1943, she married Peter R. Chase. During Mr. Chase’s tenure as a foreign service officer, she taught in Egypt, Sudan and Algeria. She also lived in Morocco, South Africa and Libya, in connection with her husband’s varied assignments. She embrace the cultures of these countries and valued the experiences she collected.

In 1970, she and her husband moved to New York. After a year in Tarrytown, they moved to Pleasantville where, nearby, she taught at the Hackley School. In 1986, they moved to Massachusetts, enjoying homes in Rockport and Cambridge.

She is survived by her four children, Deborah Chase and her husband, W. John Funk; Ann Chase and her husband, John W. Ballantine Jr.; Jonathan Chase and his wife, Andrea Chase; and Lisa Chase and her husband Clay Bacon; her four grandchildren, Sarah Wilbur, Nicholas Wilbur, Catherine Bacon and Olivia Bacon; her sister, Ric Spee 10 nieces and nephews; and her longtime traveling companion, Gordon Thomas.

She was predeceased by her husband; a daughter, Susan Chase; and a sister, Ann Limerick.

Memorial gifts in her name may be made to the Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockport, MA 01966; the Rockport Democratic Town Committee, 35 Broadway, Rockport; and to Hospice of the North Shore, 12 High St., Danvers, MA 01923.

A memorial service at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Rockport will be in the spring.

Burial at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge will be private.

Funeral arrangements are being conducted by the Burgess & Mackey Funeral Home, 201 Main St., Rockport.