

Gable Hecker

1923 - 2021



Hecker, Patricia Gamble

Philanthropist and community volunteer, died Saturday, July 24, 2021, peacefully in her Clayton home at age 98. Patty was born March 18, 1923 in Clayton, Missouri, and attended Community and John Burroughs Schools. She graduated cum laude from Vassar College in 1944 with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and from Washington University in 1968 with a Master's Degree in Arts in Archaeology.

She is survived by two sons, Bruce Hecker (Nedra) and Clark Hecker (Mary); nephew Clark Tewel (Lisa); a granddaughter Caroline Hecker (Jason Bost); four grandsons, Nicholas (Kathryn), Eric, Paul, and Clarence Hecker, and three great-grandchildren. Her Husband of 64 years, Harvard Hecker, died in 2013 and her daughter, Susan, died in 2000.

Upon leaving college (1945-49) Mrs. Hecker taught drama at John Burroughs. She served on the Board of Trustees of Community School and as the first president of its Alumni Board. She served on the Board of the Archaeological Society, St. Louis chapter, as well as on the Board of the Junior League of St. Louis, and was editor of the latter's magazine. Active in many community organizations, Patty served as president of both the Decorative

Arts and the Beaux Arts Societies of the St. Louis Art Museum as well as on its Board of Trustees. As a member of the Friends Board of the St. Louis Zoo she organized its successful travel program and served as the first female Commissioner of the Zoo from 1980-1983. She was the only docent for several years at the St. Louis Science Center in its original Oak Knoll Park location. In 1970, Mrs. Hecker was a founding member of the Wild Canid Society in Eureka, MO (now the Endangered Wolf Sanctuary) and served on that Board for several years. In 1977, she was a Trustee of Pitzer College in Claremont, California, and in 1991 became a member emerita of that Board. Since 1983, she has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, serving on its Executive Board, becoming a Life Member in 2005.

Mrs. Hecker was chairman of two archaeological trips to Greece in 1966 and 1969, taking 160 participants under the leadership of the late Dr. George Mylonas of Washington University. She helped found and was President of the Mycenaean Foundation, in Mycenae, Greece, to further Bronze Age study and she excavated there in 1972.

Together with her husband, Mrs. Hecker traveled extensively from the 1960s to 2000s. Using his film footage and her script and narration, their 25 nature films from around the world were presented at various venues, and were used when she lectured at local schools.