

Ellen (Stewart) Alter

JULY 12, 1926 - AUGUST 23, 2018 (AGE 92)



Ellen Stewart Alter, 92, of Wooster Ohio passed away peacefully on August 23, 2018, following a brief illness.

She was born on July 12, 1926 in Franklin, Pennsylvania. Her parents, Bertha Wood and F. Leslie Stewart, were both teachers, a profession that Ellen also chose because of her love of literature and drama.

After graduating from Westminster College, Ellen traveled to India to teach at Woodstock School, a Christian international school in Mussoorie, a town in the Himalayan foothills. She and her husband, Robert Alter were married there in 1948 and later worked as Presbyterian missionaries in Mainpuri, Fatehgarh and Etah as well as at Woodstock, where they remained on the staff until 1978. In addition to teaching English, Ellen was Alumni Secretary at Woodstock and edited The Quadrangle, the alumni journal.

Though Ellen maintained strong ties with her family in Pennsylvania, she made India her home for most of her adult life. She studied Hindi and spoke it fluently. Ellen and Bob's house in Mussoorie, "Oakville," was always open to family and friends. After retirement, they settled in Wooster and lived here for more than twenty years, though they returned to India regularly for annual visits.

Ellen and Bob were married for 63 years, before he passed away in 2011. They were both members of the First Presbyterian Church in Wooster. Ellen had a passion for theater and poetry, as well as reading and films. She directed and acted in a number of plays at Woodstock School. Her poetry expressed a joy for nature's subtle mysteries and the gentle epiphanies of daily life.

Ellen is survived by her three sons and daughters-in-law: Stephen (Ameeta), Joseph (Nicole), Andrew (Frances). She had six grandchildren: Jayant, Shibani, Peter, Nathaniel, Nicola and Benjamin.

A memorial service will be organized at the First Presbyterian Church later this year. According to her wishes, Ellen's ashes will be taken to India for burial beside Bob in the Landour cemetery, Mussoorie.