



## Ann Russell Hanson

May 23, 1914 - November 17, 2011

Ann Russell Hanson, 97, of Fond du Lac, passed away peacefully on Thursday, November 17, 2011, at St. Agnes Hospital. She was born on May 23, 1914, in Appleton, the daughter of Benjamin and Margaret Winslow Russell. Ann spent the first 11 years of her life in the small prairie town of Hamill, South Dakota, where her father was a banker. She grew up in Appleton after the family moved back in 1925, and she attended public schools there. From the time she was a small child, she liked to draw and was very interested in plants. These two passions stayed with her all her life. After graduating from Lawrence College with an art degree, she attended the New York Art Students League. Then she went on to study at the National Academy of Design in New York, where she won the Suydan Silver Medal for portrait painting. After working for a year in Chicago as a freelance illustrator, she married Fred Hanson on May 4, 1941. They made their first home in Reedsburg, Wisconsin, where Fred was teaching. The couple spent the war years in Newport, Rhode Island, and Waukegan, Illinois, where Fred was stationed in the Navy. In 1945, Fred took a job teaching and coaching at the high school in Fond du Lac, and the family, which now included two children, moved to an old farm near the city. Two more children were born in Fond du Lac, and it is on that farm that the four Hanson children grew up. Ann's passion for art and plants combined as she gradually created the gardens and landscapes that surrounded the family home. Many summers were spent working with her husband, Fred, on renovation projects on their old

farmhouse. But there was always time for a day trip, or a longer camping trip, when work was done, to their cherished place on the bluffs at Gills Rock, Wisconsin. One of the fondest memories her children have is of the many times the family trips would be interrupted by the need to stop and look at some interesting plant beside the road. She always had a sense of adventure and was the driving force behind many family "expeditions". Over the years, as her children grew, she began painting again and then doing landscape design for other people. There are many gardens, and some parks, in the Fond du Lac area, that bear her touch. She lived a full, interesting life, and often commented on how wonderful her family and friends were. She had the ability to see something of interest and beauty in her surroundings, even after she could no longer go outdoors to tend her gardens. Her mind was sharp and her interest in politics keen, up until the end. She was active in the League of Women Voters for many years. Ann will be greatly missed by her children, nieces and nephews, and all the friends she held dear for so many years. She is survived by her four children: Bruce V. (Kveta) Hanson of Stanton, Nebraska, and their daughter, Myra (Bill) Knapp and children of Linden, Iowa; Carol H. (Richard) Pollnac of Saunderstown, Rhode Island, and their children: Kathryn Pollnac (Caitlin Kiernan) of Providence, Rhode Island, Stephanie Pollnac (Peter Waisnor) and their child of Brooklyn, New York, and Fredric Pollnac (Melany Cheeseman) of Bozeman, Montana; Roger S. (Lisa) Hanson of Green Bay, and her son Christopher; and Sally W. Larson of Fond du Lac, and her children: Benjamin (Jessica) Larson, and Elizabeth (Nathan) Ahlborn of North Fond du Lac, and his son Ripley. Preceding her in death were her parents; her brothers, Roger and Carson Russell; and her beloved husband, Fred Hanson. No formal services are planned.

# Tribute Wall

PS

“ *Ann was a great mentor to me in the ways of nature, design and creating a beautiful circumstance. She showed me gentle persuasion, quiet confidence and thirst for lifelong learning. Memories of Fred and Ann will always be an integral part of who I am. I am grateful to have known them.*

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**Pamela Penn Sprenger** - November 21, 2011 at 05:18 PM

AP

“ *Ann was such an important part of my childhood. No visit back to Wisconsin was ever complete without a stop to see Ann -- and before that Ann and Fred. I loved her -- so sharp and so attuned to everything around her. I remember how as a child she'd have me stop and spend ten minutes just looking at the interior fold of a lily. I'm so grateful I knew her. All my sympathy to her family. You were all so lucky to have her. Big hug. Ann Peters*

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**Ann Peters** - November 21, 2011 at 12:36 PM

AN

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**Ann Peters of Brooklyn, NY** - November 21, 2011 at 12:00 AM

AN

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Ann Peters of Brooklyn, NY - November 21, 2011 at 12:00 AM

ND

“ *What an amazing person & a loss to so many. She will be sadly missed*

Nancy Donohue - November 20, 2011 at 02:04 PM

ST

“ *My Deepest Sympathy to you and your family. My Thoughts & Prayers are with you.*

Stacie - November 20, 2011 at 12:27 PM

JO

“ *Betsy, Sally, Ben and family - I am so sorry for your loss. What an beautiful woman she was and you have many cherished memories to keep her spirit alive with. You are all wonderful people and I know Ann had a lot to do with that. Hugs to you all! Love - Joni*

Joni - November 19, 2011 at 12:14 PM

NB

“ *My thoughts are with you all. What a remarkable woman Ann was and what a life she and Fred had!*

Nancy Otness Bent - November 19, 2011 at 10:59 AM

TB

“ *My family and I are thinking of you ~ sending much Love & Light to the family and friends of this amazing woman. May the Joy of happy memories bring you Peace & comfort.*

Traci Blanchette - November 19, 2011 at 09:55 AM

EL

“ Grandma...we love you very much and we know that you are enjoying your time with grandpa once again.

Elizabeth (Betsy) Larson - November 19, 2011 at 09:33 AM

TW

“ My family and I are thinking of you ~ sending much Love & Light to the family and friends of this amazing woman. May the Joy of happy memories bring you Peace & comfort.

Traci Blanchette of Fond du Lac, WI - November 19, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JL

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Joni of Fond du Lac - November 19, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MG

“ Words cannot express the sadness we feel for you. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Matt & Nancy Gattuso - November 18, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MG

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Matt & Nancy Gattuso - January 01, 1753 at 05:18 PM