



Cynthia Collins Luden

October 16, 2025

Cynthia Emily Collins Luden passed away on Thursday, October 16. She was 97 years old.

Cynthia was the only child of Arthur Collins II and Helen Van Pelt Wilson. She grew up in Moorestown, New Jersey until her parents divorced and then moved to Philadelphia. Cynthia had a half-brother Arthur Collins III who passed away October 2020.

After high school at Germantown Friends School, Cynthia went to Bradford Junior College in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Needing a change of pace, she went to California where she completed her undergraduate degree at UC Berkley. The art scene and Bohemian lifestyle fit her adventurous spirit. She met and married artist and writer George Allen Cooper and had a daughter, Susanna.

They moved to New York City where Cynthia worked as an editor for a number of publications, including a series of photography books for the Famous Writers School and the Ford Foundation. We discovered a postcard from Julia Child written in 1961 thanking Cynthia for assisting her with her cookbook, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*.

She and George divorced and in 1963, Cynthia married Ben Venuto Luden. They lived in Westport, Connecticut for many years. They had a son, Eric and Ben adopted Susanna. Cynthia went on to receive a Masters Degree in English from Fairfield University.

Cynthia was passionate about art, literature, music and poetry. She started a

poetry group in Westport that continued for at least 40 years. Her home was filled with beautiful artwork and eclectic objects from around the world. She dabbled in watercolor painting and loved making her own assemblages from collected objects from her beachfront home in Bridgeport.

Her passports were always full of many stamps. She loved learning other cultures and languages, and traveled and spent time in England, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Germany, Austria, and Spain. She took Adlerian workshops through the Adler Institute in New York City and studied more in Tel Aviv. For many years, she hosted parties and events at her home in Westport. She was the matriarch of her extended family and gathered her brother and many cousins for the holidays. She enjoyed welcoming people from all walks of life to gather at her table.

As fortune would have it, her high school sweetheart, Frank Hartung, encouraged her to go back for their 60th high school reunion in 2005. He had lost his first wife a few years earlier. This rekindled their friendship and they started a long distance relationship, supporting Amtrak as they travelled between Pennsylvania and Connecticut for years. They took a number of trips together, including several countries in Europe and then China.

They finally married and Cynthia moved down to Spring House Estates in Lower Gwynedd, Pennsylvania to be with Frank. Frank died in 2019 and Cynthia remained at the senior residence.

Cynthia is survived by her daughter, Susanna Collins Butler of Colorado, her son Eric Wilson Luden and daughter-in-law J. Sybylla Smith of Cambridge MA, grandson Simon Smith Luden of Cambridge, MA, granddaughter Eliza Collins Luden of Colorado, and numerous extended family members.

We are grateful for the care provided by Spring House Estates and the Hospice team. The hospice caregivers provide an invaluable service for all of us. Please consider a donation to the Hospice Foundation. <https://hospicefoundation.org/donate/>

Cemetery Details

Colestown Cemetery

Kings Highway
Cherry Hill, NJ

Events

Details are pending.