Maj Rosander Curtis

Maj Rosander Curtis, of Toledo, Ohio, passed away peacefully November 1, 2006, at Hospice of Northwest Ohio.

She was born December 14, 1945, to Torsten and Maja Rosander in Fagerhult, Sweden. Maj grew up on the family farm in Fagerhult and attended high school in Kalmar, Sweden. She obtained her baccalaureate degree from the University of Lund and received a master's degree at Librarian School in Stockholm.

While studying in Stockholm in 1970 she met Larry Curtis of Toledo, Ohio and the two were subsequently married. Since then Maj and Larry have found ways to effectively divide their time between Toledo and Sweden. In Sweden Maj worked in bibliotherapy in a hospital library in Linköping, in a public library in Kalmar, and as cataloguer of Radio and Television Programs at the Swedish Radio and Television network in Stockholm.

In her early life, Maj was surrounded by her grandmother's handwoven sheets and towels, her mother's handwoven rugs, and her aunt's handwoven curtains and upholstery. These early exposures laid the foundation for the direction of Maj's life. When she moved to Toledo they guided her and allowed her to find a sense of continuity through carrying on this tradition. Albeit, in a new setting with needed adaptations. The structured aspects of the loom provided her with direction and order. The direction and order to the threads used for the warp, presented unlimited choices of technique, fiber, and color.

She became a certified Master Gardener, once again allowing her to express her creativity in choices of design, plant life, color, and texture. In addition to beautiful gardens at home, she took responsibility for the herb and raised bed gardens at Toledo Botanical Gardens, and the Blair garden also at TBG. Her artistry and influence has left a living legacy as seen in gardens throughout Northwest Ohio. Maj shared her vast knowledge and skills with the community in classes, demonstrations, and photography. Her work has been widely displayed in galleries in Ohio and Michigan.

Closest to the deceased are her husband, Larry; mother, Maja; sister, Kicki (Ola), nephew, Arvid; niece, Hilda; brother-in-law, Ulf and countless friends. She was preceded in death by her father, Torsten Rosander and brother, Reine Rosander. A memorial service will be held at a later date at Corpus Christi University Parish. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Hospice of Northwest Ohio or a charity of your choice.

Sköna Maj (Beatiful May): An Enchanted Life

A Memoir Published 2009
Master Gardener also taught weaving

Maj Rosander Curtis, 60, a native of Sweden and a certified Master Gardener who displayed her work at Toledo Botanical Garden, died of complications from ovarian cancer on Wednesday at the Hospice of Northwest Ohio, South Detroit Avenue. Ms. Curtis spent much of her time in Toledo after marrying Larry Curtis, a professor at the University of Toledo, but the couple traveled to Sweden in the summer and when Mr. Curtis was on sabbatical.

During those visits she worked as a librarian at a public library, at a hospital, and at the Swedish Radio and Television Network in Stockholm. In the United States, Ms. Curtis was a weaver and taught the skill in Toledo as well as at Toledo Botanical Garden.

"She was good at everything she did," said Mr. Curtis, now a distinguished professor emeritus at UT. "She brought another culture set of values and thoughts with her that blended in very nicely with those of the United States."

Ms. Curtis was born in Fagerhult, Sweden, and was working on her master's degree at the Librarian School in Stockholm in 1970 when she met her future husband, who was doing research there. Ms. Curtis grew up on a farm, and the lessons she learned there helped her in gardening, her husband said.

"When she came here, she began putting things in the ground," Mr. Curtis said. "She began volunteering [at Toledo Botanical Garden] when it was still Crosby Gardens. She had this ability to put forms together with texture and color. She liked to do theme gardens, like the raised garden and herb garden."

Mr. Curtis said his wife shared her skills with others in classes, demonstrations, and photography. He said her work has been widely displayed in galleries all over Ohio and Michigan.

He said his wife was a talented weaver, which she picked up from her mother and grandmother.

"She went to study much of [weaving] herself and added greatly to the oral tradition from which she was taught," Mr. Curtis said. "She gave weaving exhibitions, and her wall hangings are for sale at various craft stores."

Surviving are husband, Larry; mother, Maja; and sister, Kicki. The family plans a memorial service for Ms. Curtis at a later date at Corpus Christi University Parish, 2955 Dorr St. Arrangements are by the Bersticker-Scott Funeral Home.
Honorary Doctorate Award Ceremony
University of Lund, May 28, 1999