

Doe Thornburg – Founder of International Women Associates

Marie Dora “Doe” Thornburg died peacefully on May 25, 2018. Doe Thornburg (née Wettlaufer) was born in Boston on August 2, 1922, the eldest of eight siblings, all of whom preceded her in death. Doe attended Boston’s Northeastern University, Chandler Business School, and Malkin Conservatory where she studied voice and piano. Her upbringing was greatly influenced by her paternal grandmother who, on numerous occasions, took her to Europe to complete her education in the fashion of the Grand Tour. As World War II was beginning, Doe joined the Red Cross as one of its spokespersons and organizers.

After Doe came to Chicago, she served on the Boards of the Lyric Opera Guild, Hull House, the Museum of Contemporary Art (Women’s Board), the American Cancer Society, International House, the International Visitors Center, and the Chicago Tourism Council, as well as on committees of Chicago Seminars on the Future and Know Your Chicago.

For a number of years, Doe was National President of the English-Speaking Union. For her untiring efforts on behalf of this organization in improving the relations between Great Britain and the United States, she was honored by Queen Elizabeth II as a “motivator of people” and was made an officer in the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.).

In 1978, while working with The International Visitors Center of Chicago, Doe recognized the need for a separate organization focusing exclusively on women from different international cultures and backgrounds living in Chicago and founded the International Women Associates (IWA). Its mission was “to promote understanding and cooperation among Chicago-area women of all nations.”

Of all Doe’s many contributions, International Women Associates was her proudest. Her vision was one of world unity in the face of cultural, political and social conflict. She believed that bringing women of diverse backgrounds together created opportunities for understanding and appreciating what makes us world citizens. At the time of her death, IWA membership had grown to over 500 women from 60 countries. Through participation in language, culture, and activity programs, as well as in larger public meetings, IWA members’ horizons are broadened, consciousness lifted, and friendships diversified. Its quest to put global understanding into action is inspired by Doe’s mantra, “to see the sacred in everyone.”

IWA honored Doe in 2012 on the occasion of her 90th birthday by creating the IWA Doe Thornburg Scholarship. The purpose of the scholarship is to invest in students so that they become engaged global citizens. Doe believed that there is no better way to understand a different culture than to have direct interaction with that culture. For this reason, the scholarship was created to help female college students pursue their dream of studying abroad. To date, the IWA Doe Thornburg Scholarship is offered at Columbia College, Northwestern University, School of the Art Institute and University of Illinois at Chicago.

In 1972 Doe married Robert Thornburg, owner and director of Thornburg Clinical Laboratory, who died in 1997. In “Bob” she met her soul mate. Doe was “one in a million,” a truly remarkable individual in spirit and physicality right up until the end. She had a beautiful smile, exuded an elegant sense of style and lived an engaged, purposeful life.

She is survived by seven nieces and nephews: Catherine Wettlaufer Buehler (Jay), Robert Alan Doonan (Becky), Suzanne Marie Doonan, Andrew David Doonan (Sherron), William Lyons Doonan, Rear Admiral Michael Wettlaufer (Tina), and Professor John S. Wettlaufer (Ulrika) and their children, as well as by her cousins. She is also survived by stepdaughter Carol Kathleen Thornburg.

Contributions may be made to the *IWA Doe Thornburg Scholarship Fund*, in care of International Women Associates, 307 N Michigan Avenue, Suite 702, Chicago, IL 60601, 312-263-1421 or online at www.iwachicago.org

A Celebration of the Life of "Doe" Marie Dora Thornburg



The Arts Club of Chicago

September 12, 2018

Prelude Music

Welcome *Marian Jacobson, IWA President*

Remembrances

Suzanne McCormick, Friend and Past IWA President

Pilaar Pantoja, Friend and IWA Organizational Manager

Hon. John Saville, British Consul General, US Midwest

Christopher Broadwell, Executive Director, English-Speaking Union

Bruce Witkov, Longtime Friend

Musical Reflection "The Prayer".....*Foster/Renis/Sager/Testa*

Remembrances

Neal Ball, Longtime Friend

Kathy Thornburg, Doe's Stepdaughter

Catherine Buehler, Doe's Niece

Musical Reflection "Imagine"..... *John Lennon*

Slide Show *Sevil Kutay and Roya Mehrnoosh*

Recessional.....**"When the Saints Go Marching In"**

Reception

Special Thanks

Laura Higgins, Vocalist Mark Burnell, Pianist

Michael Levin Duo

Charla Mosley, The Arts Club

Colette Clancy, The Flower Firm

"Imagine"

(Doe specifically requested this song as it embodies her wish for the world.)

Imagine there's no heaven - It's easy if you try - No hell

below us - Above us only sky

Imagine all the people - Living for today...

Imagine there's no countries - It isn't hard to do -

Nothing to kill or die for - And no religion too

Imagine all the people - Living life in peace...

You may say I'm a dreamer, But I'm not the only one

I hope someday you'll join us, And the world will be as

one

Imagine no possessions - I wonder if you can - No need for greed or hunger

A brotherhood of man - Imagine all the people - Sharing all the world...

You may say I'm a dreamer, But I'm not the only one

I hope someday you'll join us, And the world will live as one

Songwriters: JOHN WINSTON LENNON - Imagine lyrics © Downtown Music Publishing, BMG Rights Management



"Death Is Nothing At All" (A favorite poem of Doe's)

Death is nothing at all,

I have only slipped away into the next room.

I am I, and you are you;
whatever we were to each other, that, we still are.

Call me by my old familiar name,

Speak to me in the easy way which you always used,

put no difference in your tone,

wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed

at the little jokes we shared together.

Let my name ever be the household word that it always was.

Let it be spoken without effect, without the trace of a shadow on it.

Life means all that it ever meant.

It is the same as it ever was.

There is unbroken continuity.

Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?

I am waiting for you, for an interval,

somewhere very near, just around the corner.

All is well.

Henry Scott Holland