

OBITUARIES OF NANCY deWOLF THEOBALD WEHR, NANCY deWOLF WEHR SMITH NIERMANN, ERNEST WENDELL SMITH, and FREDERICK THEOBALD WEHR. ALL FROM THE BALTIMORE SUN.

Obituary of Nancy deWolf Theobald Wehr:

Nancy T. Wehr, 101, socialite who played piano and sang

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Nancy T. Wehr, a former Baltimore socialite, died of respiratory failure Sunday at Blakehurst Retirement Community. She was 101.

She was born Nancy de Wolf Theobald in Baltimore several weeks before the Great Fire of 1904.

"She always said she was a Baltimore Fire Baby," said a granddaughter, Nancy de Wolf Smith, a Wall Street Journal editor and Cockeysville resident. "She lived a rather full Baltimore life, and still had many friends of all ages due to that life and the sort of town this is."

Mrs. Wehr, who grew up on Beech Avenue and [Bolton Hill](#), spent summers at Wilton, her family's home in Catonsville.

She had been the oldest living alumna of [Roland Park](#) Country School, having graduated in 1923. She also made her debut that year at the Bachelors Cotillon.

One of the most enduring and constant components of Mrs. Wehr's life was playing piano and singing, both of which she enjoyed until her late 90s.

As a young woman, she sang with legendary tenor Enrico Caruso in New York City.

"I remember the day a piano was moved into our house, when I was four or five. I had never had my hands on a piano, although I had always sung. I fiddled around for about two minutes with one finger and in about five, I was playing "My Hero" with both hands," Mrs. Wehr wrote in an autobiographical sketch.

She was married in 1924 to Frederick Lewis Wehr, whom she had met a decade earlier in dancing class. Mr. Wehr, who later became president and chairman of Monumental Life Insurance Co., died in 1975.

For 73 years, until moving to the retirement community two years ago, Mrs. Wehr lived in the home she and her husband had built in 1930 on Berwick Road in Ruxton.

"After marriage and two children, my husband encouraged me to go back to my singing," she wrote. "This I did locally on the radio and in recitals, and also with the Columbia Opera Co. of New York, where I joined them for their tours. Although I sang

seriously, I also played the piano entirely by ear, and I played for many hospitals and fashion shows."

Songs from Mrs. Wehr's repertoire included such 1920s and 1930s standards as "Tea for Two" or from Broadway shows such as *My Fair Lady*.

"The family favorite was her rousing rendition of "42nd Street" -- played like everything else -- in some key that involved almost exclusively the black keys and a heavy foot on the loud pedal," Ms. Smith said.

At times opinionated and blunt, Mrs. Wehr also had a rapier wit.

"She had a fantastic sense of humor that at times bordered on the ridiculous. Her home was a very happy house," said Eleanor P. Baker, a friend of 70 years.

"In the 1980s, during the Reagan era, she went to one of the inaugural balls in Washington, where someone introduced her to Frank Sinatra. 'How do you do, Mr. Sinatra. I am a singer, too,' she told him," Ms. Smith said. "'What did he say?' I asked. 'Nothing,' she replied, 'but he looked jealous.'"

"Nancy was full of life and talent and was very capable of giving great parties," said Beatrice Houghton "Beatie" Marty, a friend for 50 years. "She was always so enthusiastic about things."

Mrs. Wehr was a direct descendant of two people who arrived in America on the *Mayflower* and two signers of the Declaration of Independence. She also was a distant cousin of Betsy Patterson, who was briefly married to Jerome Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother.

When it came to household and culinary matters, she was fond of quoting Patterson, who reputedly said, 'There are two things a Maryland lady should know about: fine furniture and that the art of serving a good meal is no more complicated than serving good cuts of meat and vegetables in season.'

Mrs. Wehr was a decade younger than her cousin, Wallis Warfield Simpson, who married the Prince of Wales in 1937. That marriage, which disrupted the British empire, provoked a dismissive reaction from this representative of Baltimore's nobility. "My grandmother, without mentioning his name, said, 'She married a foreigner and left town for good,'" Ms. Smith said.

For years, Mrs. Wehr volunteered in hospitals and helped run fairs that raised money for the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, where she had been a longtime communicant.

She was an early environmentalist, before the movement came of age, fighting development in her neighborhood. She also enjoyed the outdoors, on snowy days careening down Berwick Road on top of a Flexible Flyer sled.

"She continued to do this into her 70s," the granddaughter said.

Mrs. Wehr bred and showed champion Yorkshire terriers and was a member of the Yorkshire Terrier Club of America.

She had been a board member of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in Maryland, Children's Hospital, SPCA, and a trustee of the [Peabody Institute](#). She was a

member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in Maryland, the Roslyn Garden Club, the Mount Vernon Club, Elkridge Club and L'Hirondelle Club.

"She lived a wholesome life, didn't smoke, and enjoyed an occasional glass of wine. She had good genes. Her mother, grandmother and cousins all lived into their 90s and 100s," Ms. Smith said.

Services were held at her church Thursday.

Also surviving are five other grandchildren. A son, Frederick Theobald Wehr, died this year; and a daughter, Nancy de Wolf Wehr Smith Niermann, died in 2004.

Obituary of Nancy deWolf Wehr Smith Niermann:

Nancy Niermann, who sold real estate and was an avid tennis player, died of cancer Friday at Gilchrist Center for Hospice Care. The Ruxton resident was 76.

Born Nancy deWolf Wehr in Baltimore and raised in Ruxton, she was a 1946 graduate of Bryn Mawr School and made her debut at the Bachelors Cotillon.

Mrs. Niermann sold real estate with Hill & Co. and was based at the [Village of Cross Keys](#). She became a Realtor about 30 years ago and earlier had been associated with William H. Wilson in [Roland Park](#).

Mrs. Niermann was a Maryland state seniors doubles champion about 10 years ago playing with Margo Shriver, the mother of tennis great Pam Shriver. She also taught tennis at the John Gardiner Tennis Ranch in Scottsdale, Ariz., while living there more than 30 years ago.

She was a member of the Mount Vernon and L'Hirondelle clubs and served on a Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage committee. She also belonged to the Colonial Dames and the Society of Mayflower Descendants.

Services were held Monday at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, where she was a communicant.

Survivors include her husband of 29 years, Dr. William A. Niermann, a pediatric allergist; a son, Peter deWolf Smith of Stevenson; two daughters, Nancy deWolf Smith of Cockeysville and Wendell Smith Mullins of Ruxton; her mother, Nancy Theobald Wehr of Ruxton; a brother, Frederick Theobald Wehr of Baltimore; and two granddaughters. Her 1949 marriage to Dr. Ernest Wendell Smith ended in divorce.

Obituary of Ernest Wendell Smith:

Ernest Wendell Smith (3-12-03)

Ernest Wendell Smith, 80, of Phoenix, passed away on March 12, 2003. Born in Columbus, Georgia, he was raised in Charlotte, North Carolina. He received his medical degree from the Duke University School of Medicine, and completed his internship, residency and a fellowship in Hematology at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, where he was subsequently an associate professor of Medicine, Microbiology, and Dermatology, and assistant professor of Hematology. Among his research contributions at Johns Hopkins was his groundbreaking development of a method for the study of hemoglobin by electrophoresis. In 1967, he moved to Phoenix, where he joined the medical practice of McDaniel and McWilliams, which would become Valley Internists. He is survived by his wife Patricia Smith of Phoenix; his children Nancy deWolf Smith, Wendell Smith Mullins, and Peter deWolf Smith of Baltimore; and stepchildren Ernest Kinsolving of Redwood City, California, and Alan Kinsolving, of Juneau, Alaska.

Obituary of Frederick Theobald Wehr:

Frederick T. Wehr, 79, development director

July 06, 2005 | By Jacques Kelly | Jacques Kelly, SUN STAFF

Frederick Theobald Wehr, a retired development director for the old Church Home and Hospital and a part-time aviator who once flew under the Bay Bridge, died of cancer Monday at his Roland Park home. He was 79.

Born in Baltimore and raised in Ruxton, he was a 1943 graduate of the Gilman School. He enrolled at Princeton University but almost immediately entered the Navy's accelerated officer training program and spent three years in the Navy during World War II, serving as the navigator on the Herbert J. Thomas, a destroyer in the Pacific.

In a private memoir, Mr. Wehr said he was among the first to enter Japan after its 1945 surrender. His destroyer met returning Japanese warships and disarmed them.

After the war, he went back to Princeton University, where he majored in history, graduating in 1948.

He returned to Baltimore and joined the staff of the newly formed WMAR-TV as a news writer at the station's downtown location at Charles and Baltimore streets. He later became a director of television coverage of sports events and for several years handled the telecasting of Orioles baseball and National Football League games.

Mr. Wehr wrote in his memoir that it was exciting work on the cusp of television technology, but it paid little and involved long stretches away from home and family.

He had a lifelong interest in aviation, particularly planes built between 1914 and 1945. For years, he held a pilot's license, and he owned or co-owned three airplanes. In the memoir, he told of flying upside down over his Ruxton home and of flying under the Bay Bridge, which he did without permission. In his 40s, he made several parachute jumps "to see what it was like."

Mr. Wehr collected toy soldiers and wrote three books, *The Flags and Seals of Maryland and the United States*; a local history titled *Poe Died Here: Recollections of Church Home & Hospital*; and *Amelia*, a children's story about a little girl, her father and the spirit of Amelia Earhart.

During the 1976 Bicentennial, he also arranged with the Women's Institution at Jessup to have a mid-18th-century Maryland flag, with a British union symbol in a black-and-gold field, reproduced.

From 1952 until 1960, he worked in advertising in New York, as well as for the old Joseph Katz Co. and the H.W. Buddemeier Co., both Baltimore firms.

He was then Goucher College's development director and, for 19 years held the same post at Church Home and Hospital in East Baltimore, first as a department head and later as a vice president. While there, he was active in bringing the hospice movement to Baltimore. He retired in 1990.

He was a member of the Elkridge Club, the 14 W. Hamilton Street Club, the Bachelors Cotillon, the Society of Colonial Wars and the Society of Mayflower Descendants.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Friday at the Church of the Redeemer, 5603 N. Charles St.

Survivors include his wife of 15 years, Sylvia Johnson-Eggleston Wehr, associate dean for external affairs at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. His first wife, Grace Mitchell Wehr, died in 1977, and his second wife, Lois Wald Wehr, died in 1988.

He is also survived by a son, Frederick Lewis Wehr II of Cairo, Egypt; two daughters, Emily Wehr Emerick and Jennifer Wehr Clouse, both of Baltimore; his mother, Nancy Theobald Wehr of Towson; three stepdaughters, Elizabeth Eggleston Drigotas, Anne Eggleston Broadus and Elaine Eggleston Doherty, all of Baltimore; seven grandchildren; and four stepgrandchildren.
