

## Madelyn Smoak

### Folk Dancers Comments

Alice Thacher, Mar 12, 2022, 10:01 PM

Dear All,

Madelyn Smoak has died. She was a folk dancer from back in the day who came to our recent reunions. Madelyn was tiny but her personality was huge, her art and her garden exuberant. Clarke and I learned of her passing from the Old West Durham listserv:

TracyMerg <tracymerg@gmail.com>

Subject: [owdna] Sad news of a neighbor's passing

Hello Neighbors -

I just wanted to let everyone know about the passing of our dear neighbor Madeline Smoak on Rosehill Ave. She died this week at home.

Madeline was a member of our community for decades. You've definitely seen her amazing garden. She was also an accomplished artist.

She will be missed. We don't have the funeral information yet, but I am happy to share when we find out.

Kind Regards,  
Tracy and Brian  
Rosehill Ave

Those of you who go way back might remember that she took New York City by storm, as Belle Starr in Diamond Studs, a Red Clay Ramblers project, in 1975.

Gosh, we will miss her.

Regards,  
Alice Thacher

S. McIntee

This is such a loss to Durham. She was amazingly creative. My sister and I saw she had work in the NC Botanical garden sculpture show. Madelyn last came to dancing at the reunion in 2019 and before that, she came to some of our sessions at the synagogue on Watts St. She is someone I wish I had talked with more.



Ann Demaine

This hit me hard--I had no idea Madelyn had health problems, esp. as I, too, had seen her contributions to "Sculpture in the Garden" last fall.

At one point Madelyn had sort of "adopted" two girls we also knew as students at Club Blvd. School where we volunteered. She brought them to folk dancing several times while we were still at Beth El Synagogue.

She was definitely part of our folk dance family and I will miss her.

Jane Cox

Madelyn and I were great buddies in the 70s. We loved dancing at the center in Chapel Hill and enjoyed all the great folks we were dancing with! In recent years we've reconnected by Facebook and email and have had lunches at points in between Charlotte and Durham. She had leg and back pain that kept her from dancing and other activities but found time for good deeds for friends, growing her garden and sharing it with others, lots of cooking of great food and sharing. During the pandemic her front porch became a gathering place where she could bring a friend and share. I already miss her more than words can say. She was an artist to her core and a wonderful friend to many people. ❤️

Lauren Martell

Madelyn was one of the belly dancers for the Golden Genies, the senior dance troupe that I was honored to lead 2009 to 2013. She was an audience favorite when we performed!

Joanne Napoli

Yes, I too knew Madelyn and was surprised. She was very open and easy to talk to. Definitely will be missed.

Mike McQuown

I'm sorry to hear about Madelyn's passing. I didn't know her well, but I saw her in one of her Diamond Studs performances in Chapel Hill, back in the '70's. She was excellent!

Ever after, when I happened to see her, I thought about her wonderful performance as Belle Star.

Other Comments

From [Stephen Raburn here](#).

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[facebook.com/MadArtjewelry](https://facebook.com/MadArtjewelry) (see her work in the pictures section)

