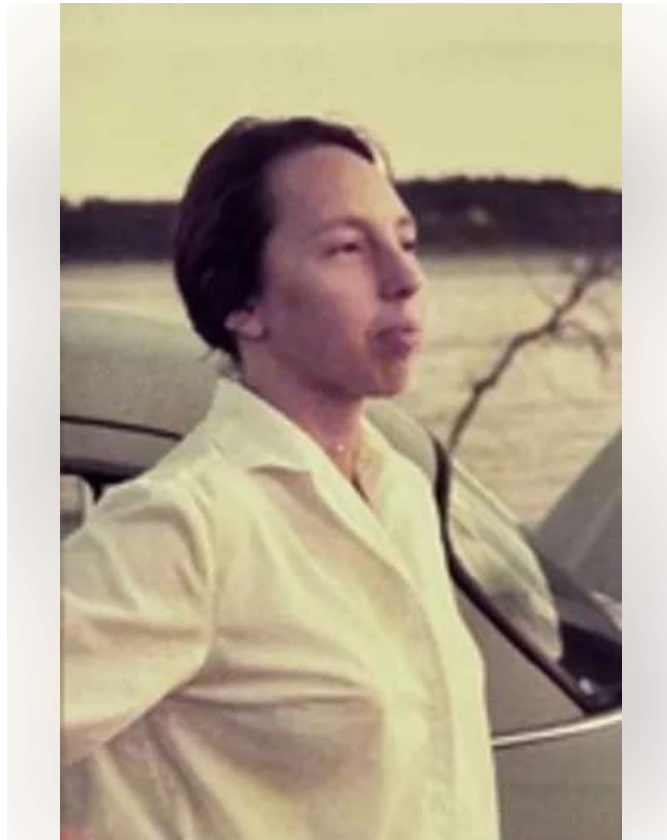


Jean Allen Mather





Jean Allen Mather.

December 2, 1925 to January 9, 2025.

Jean Mather died on Thursday, January 9, 2025 in her bed at Silverado Barton Springs, in Austin, TX, after a brief illness. She had just turned 99 years old. She was predeceased by her husband, Robert (Bob) George Mather in 1984. She is survived by her daughter Emily Mather Phillips and her husband Rick Phillips and son Richard Mather and his wife Sally Mather, and their children Nina (13) and Flynn (9).

Jean Allen was born in a suburb of Boston MA on December 2, 1925 to Julia Wright Allen and Howard Locke Allen. She was the eldest of three children, with a sister, Julia and a brother, Ronald. She graduated from Brookline High School, and earned a bachelor's degree in political science at Antioch College in 1948. She worked in Chicago, IL where she met her future husband, Bob Mather, while living in a coop there. They married on February 14, 1948. After Bob finished his degree in Architecture at Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, they moved to Cambridge MA where Jean enrolled at Harvard University, eventually earning her master's degree in Landscape Architecture in 1956. In that same year, the couple joined a travel/study group from the Putney Graduate School and spent 9 months driving a Volkswagen van thousands of miles from Europe to eastern Africa then through the Middle East and eventually to India to study USA aid projects. In 1957, once the Putney Graduate School group dispersed, Jean decided to remain in Europe where she was hired by the parks department of Stockholm Sweden. Bob went back to the USA to find a job and a home.

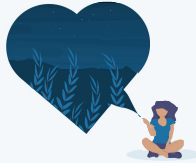
Bob settled in Austin TX, securing a teaching position in the School of Architecture at the University of Texas and Jean returned from Europe and joined him there. They had their first child, Emily, in 1961 and bought a house in the Travis Heights neighborhood. In 1963, Bob took a sabbatical and the family moved to Baghdad, Iraq so Bob could teach architecture at the University of Baghdad. In 1965, their second child, Richard, was born in Baghdad. In late 1965, the family moved back to Austin TX. Jean had her own business as a landscape architect in her home, while Bob taught architecture at UT Austin until his death in 1984.

In 1971, a creek threatened by development in Travis Heights compelled Jean to become active in neighborhood issues and she fought against the piping of creeks ever after. She co-founded the South River City Citizens (SRCC) in 1972 and was an active member until 2016. She and Bob worked on the Austin Tomorrow Plan throughout the mid 1970's. She served on the City of Austin Planning Commission from 1971 to 1977 and then again from 1993 to 1999. She also served on the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission from 2002 until 2008. Jean was a tireless advocate for her neighborhood, for protecting green spaces, and for responsible growth, which often pitted her against the powerful development interests. And though they frequently remained on opposite sides of the fence, Jean took pains to keep a working relationship with most of her adversaries and became friends with some. She was a true liberal and an optimist who would attend meeting after meeting and vote in the minority countless times, and still believe that by working hard, she and the neighborhood could achieve some worthwhile benefits.

Jean didn't begin a regular exercise program until she was 50 when she joined a running group at the Town Lake YMCA. She later joined the Austin Rowing Club at age 75 and continued to scull on Town Lake (now Lady Bird Lake) well into her 80s. Jean never lost the wanderlust honed during her early years and she and her family travelled extensively in Mexico numerous times in the 1970s and 1980s. After she lost Bob to a stroke in 1984 (at age 63), Jean travelled further afield with a revolving group of wonderful friends to many foreign lands such as Thailand, India, Nepal, Japan, Russia, Kenya, Ecuador, Peru, and the Galapagos Islands up until 2017. She even climbed Machu Pichu at age 88!

Jean was a nearly fearless, independent woman with a rebellious spirit who was not cowed by conventions. As a parent, she was open-minded, thoughtful and supportive. She was an avid gardener and enjoyed viewing art in all its many facets. She treasured her home and Travis Heights and spent much of her energy trying to shape a greener future for Austin. She loved people and had many friends and close colleagues who helped her to both enjoy life and fight for a better future. Often, when relaxing with friends, she would raise her glass and say "Ah, this is the rich, full life" and for Jean it truly was.

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