



Emily Elizabeth Foster

November 23, 1945 - September 9, 2023

Emily Elizabeth Foster (November 23, 1945 – September 9, 2023) was born in Tempe, Arizona, to her late parents Richard A. and Evelyn (Unger) Foster. After growing up in rural Vienna, Ohio, she attended Ohio State University where she earned a master’s degree in English. OSU and its environs became an integral part of her personal and professional life. There she met well-known Philosophy professor Lee Brown and they shared an adventurous life together until his death in 2014. Emily was the beating heart of the neighborhood where she lived in the same house near the university for 50 years, even writing the book on the history of the community: *The Ohio State University District: A Neighborhood History*. She applied her impeccable research and writing skills to author two additional books on Ohio history: *American Grit: A Woman’s Letters from the Ohio Frontier* and *The Ohio Frontier: An Anthology of Early Writings*. She was elegant and earthy, stubborn and generous and, above all, fearless. She was as comfortable with a wine glass as a chainsaw. Emily was both worldly and down-to-earth, equally at ease with her neighbors in the Hocking Hills and the internationally famous. She was fascinated by people who were curious and passionate about learning, rather than the merely famous. She notably commented upon meeting celebrities like Mick Jagger or Jimmy Buffett, “I found them shallow” or “Not my music, but people seemed to think he is talented.”

Emily loved the outdoors: visiting her primitive cabin in the Hocking Hills, and

hiking around the world. She was especially proud of her extensive treks through the Pyrenees and the Himalayas. Evan Brown, her beloved stepson, recalls her as “a great nurturer” of all living things, most especially found cats and dogs, many of which she offered forever homes in her house over the years. She would even carefully transport errant ants inside her home back outside unharmed. Emily and Lee’s home was filled with parties and music, with Emily playing both flute and piano. She loved to laugh and came from a long line of jokesters, saying, “Everyone has lapses of taste, but better to laugh too often than too little.”

After working as a grant writer and freelancer, she joined Columbus Monthly as a staff writer in 1985 and became a senior editor a few years later. She covered such diverse topics as homes and civic issues, as well as writing personal essays and illuminating profiles. She became editor of Cincinnati Magazine (a sister publication at the time of Columbus Monthly) in the late 1990s. Following a brief return stint at Columbus Monthly, she joined Steiner-Lesic Communications in 2000 as vice president and then moved to Ohio State as Associate Vice President, Communications, retiring in 2008. In addition to her parents, Emily was preceded in death by her husband, Lee Brown. She is survived by brothers Richard (Linda) Foster Jr. and Robert (Melissa) Foster, stepsister Jane (Chris) Walker and stepson Evan Brown, as well as nephews and nieces Gabriel Foster, Nicholas Foster, Henry Foster, Charles Foster, Margaret (Foster) Payne and Christine Foster. A celebration of Emily’s life will be held Nov. 12 at Indianola Presbyterian Church, 1970 Waldeck Ave. in Columbus. Music will begin at 2 pm Eastern Standard Time, program at 2:30 and reception at 3:30 pm. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Cat Welfare Association of Columbus.

For those unable to gather in person, a livestream will be accessible via Indianola Presbyterian Church’s links:

YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@indianolapres/streams> and

Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/indianolapres>

Celebration of Life for Emily Foster
Indianola Presbyterian Church
Sunday November 12, 2023, 2:00pm

Parking:

Attendees may park on four sites adjacent to Indianola Presbyterian Church. The Church can be entered from the sidewalk on Waldeck Ave (no stairs) or the main entrance on the south green (with stairs).

Indianola Presbyterian Church
1970 Waldeck Ave
Parking lot <https://maps.app.goo.gl/Pw4N9zsZUPQdn7vq6>

Alpha Gamma Rho
1979 Iuka Ave
Entrance to parking from Woodruff Ave and Iuka Ave
Alpha Gamma Rho <https://maps.app.goo.gl/D5Dq9D8PsxD85HMr9>

Summit Methodist Church
82 East 16th Ave
Entrance to parking from Iuka Ave and East 16th Ave
Summit on 16th United Methodist Church <https://maps.app.goo.gl/eX9v77nzM9o5KkkW6>

Graham Elementary and Middle School

140 East 16th Ave

Graham Elementary and Middle School <https://maps.app.goo.gl/38zNeuJEsC7xiah86>

For a Google Map of the parking options click here or copy and paste this link
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/FXf75Wkt7TWEjMm3A>

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

NOV 12. 2:00 PM (ET)

Indianola Presbyterian Church
1970 Waldeck Avenue
Columbus, OH 43201

Tribute Wall

KB

“ Emily was my friend of 50 + years. There are no adequate words to express this loss and sadness. Trying to channel happier times when we had a glass of wine and a sense of humor. I love you, Emily.

Karen Bell - November 12, 2023 at 03:25 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Emily Elizabeth Foster.



November 10, 2023 at 12:59 PM

EB

“ Emily was a gracious lady. She was articulate, insightful, and interested in all she encountered. I'm sad that she left us in such a way. Bless her for all the good she created.

Elizabeth Bryant - November 03, 2023 at 06:10 PM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Emily Elizabeth Foster.



October 10, 2023 at 05:06 AM

AA

“ Like all who knew Emily, I am devastated by her sudden death. Emily and I knew each other since the 1960s when we were teaching our way through grad school in the English Dept. at Ohio State. She wrote her M.A. thesis on Emily Dickinson. We used to exchange humorous anecdotes based on the mistakes made by our freshmen students (taking something for granite was one of her's) and she always had an ironitic sense of humor. I will want to continue my reminiscences of Emily and Lee closer to the time of her memorial service in November. For now, I extend my deep condolences to Emily's relatives and to Evan Brown, her stepson, Lee's son and a playmate of my son's when they were young. Sincerely, Alison Armstrong

Allison Armstrong - September 17, 2023 at 12:51 PM

JK

Lovely recollection, Allison. I went to high school with Emily and have stayed in touch all of these years.

John A. Knox - September 17, 2023 at 04:47 PM

AA

Thanks for this response John Knox. Good that you kept in touch. I keep recalling more and more about the years of friendship when in Columbus, and after left for UK and NYC. She is not to be replaced. I hope to get to Columbus for the Nov. 2 memorial. AA

Alison Armstrong - September 19, 2023 at 09:48 AM

JA

Alison what a wonderful tribute. Note that the event is November 12/Sunday now November 2. Likely a typo in your note but just wanted to make sure.

Jan Allen - September 19, 2023 at 01:12 PM

JA

I meant "not" November 2

Jan Allen - September 19, 2023 at 01:13 PM

EB

I grow up with Emily she lived right across the street from me in Vienna and still kept in touch with here, so sorry, loved her. Elinor Mizicko Bottar

Elinor Mizicko Bottar - September 19, 2023 at 02:43 PM

JW

Over the last few years, I have become closer to Emily. We have known "of " each other for many years. My mother, Nancy, was one of Evelyn's (Emily's mother) closest friends when they were growing up in Alliance Ohio. Evelyn and Dick (Emily's) parents used to double date with my Mom and Dad before WWII. Evelyn and Dick were married, and Dick trained as a meteorologist in the Army and was assigned to Arizona. My dad was in the draft and joined the Army Air Corp, when the first troops were drafted in 1942 just after Pearl Harbour. My mom and dad did not get married until after the war. They got married on a 5 day pass and honeymooned in New York City in June of '45. Mom and I lived in Youngstown Ohio, and the Fosters in Vienna, Ohio. Our mothers kept in touch.

My dad died at 36 in 1951. Emily's mother, Evelyn, passed away from cancer a few years after Dick had relocated to North Carolina to take up a meteorology job there. He decided to move back to Ohio where Dick had friends and Bob, at sixteen, could go back to high school for his last years. Nancy offered Dick and young Bob some home cooking after too many "Hamburger Helper meals" prepared by Dick. Our lives did not cross paths again until Dick Foster, a recent widower, and Nancy Lloyd, a widow for over 30 plus years, met up again, and were married soon after that our lives became more entangled. The new couple were delighted with each other. They spent the first years or so traveling the world and had a wonderful time. My mother was so keen to have a companion, and Dick was a willing partner. Very unfortunately, Nancy began the slow down hill road with Alzheimer's in her mid 70s. Dick was with her every step of the way and it took quite a toll on him. The Alzheimer sufferer has very little understanding why things are changing. My mother was diagnosed in 1982 and died in Oct. 2000. Dick passed away in 1999, less than a year before. He was helping her and by her side the whole time and would not leave her until he was called to by a higher authority. Emily shouldered a lot of this effort and angst concerning our parents. She lived the nearest and is the main reason she was called to come if there was an issue.

Time passed and both Chris and I retired. We had bought a small house in Winchester, UK a few years earlier. His family lived very close to Winchester and he loved the small and quaint city next to the Cathedral. I had always admired Emily's rather gutsy and adventurous approach to life. She and Lee stayed in our small house in the UK several times in the 90s. Lee was getting less able to move around on foot so Emily in her "lets gets on with it attitude" rented a wheelchair on several visits and wheeled him around Winchester----not a flat city, plus all over London, mainly train station to train station so that he could get to his speaking and lecture engagements outside of London. Over time, we acquired another small house in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We drove across the States to SF every year from 2011 to 2023. Our sweet Golden Retriever, Harper, came with. She and Speedy used to get along quite well which included Harper's large interest in Speedy's bed.

Over the years, we became regular visitors to Emily house in Columbus. 2023 ended our last regular trip to Santa Fe as Harper passed away, and we sold our main house in Virginia. We thought that times would not change and we would return to visit Santa Fe and Emily. We will go forward with her memory and a deep sadness but not a heavy heart, as she and Lee always lived life to the fullest.

Jane Walker - October 26, 2023 at 12:16 PM

JK

Jane, your recap of the entwined history of your two families is fascinating, filling in a good number of blanks for me. I do love your characterization of Emily's "let's get on with it" approach. That would be Emily.

John A. Knox - October 28, 2023 at 03:02 AM

MN

I have been Emily's hairstylist since 1994. Like bartenders and priests, stylists are privy to so much about a person's life. Emily had her own sense of style, and it was always an adventure when she was ready to try something new. I have written "MORE ASH!" in her file several times! We talked about her travels, (and the training for some). We spoke of gardening and nature and pets and beauty. I met her during the most creative time of her life, and she met it with gusto. Em was the kind of person that tried her best to do good works while no one was looking. She was devoted to her beloved husband Lee, her family and friends, and her favorite places on Earth. I miss her dearly. Sincerely, Margie Novak

Margie Novak - November 11, 2023 at 05:30 PM