



Mrs. Beverle R. Reimann-Marcus

February 16, 1931 - May 20, 2023

Beverle Reimann-Marcus, whose triumphant life and pioneering career included serving as the first woman to lead the Lenox Chamber of Commerce, died on May 20, 2023, after a long and notable life. She was 92 years old.

Beverle Ruth Slaney Reimann-Marcus was born in Derby, Connecticut on February 16, 1931, the daughter of John Vincent Slaney and Ruth Helene Henry. Abandoned by her father at the age of five, she lived her early years alternately between orphanages and the home of her stepfather, the Sag Harbor, New York pharmacist Richard Reimann. She left that home in her teens and her mother died when she was 20. Alone in the world at an early age, she would remake her life with a family of friends - and ultimately create one of her own. She went on to attend the Grace-New Haven School of Nursing (later renamed Yale-New Haven School of Nursing) and eventually earned a masters in psychology at Harvard University.

A longtime supporter of the arts, she was deeply engaged in the Greenwich Village music scene in the late 1950s and early 1960s. She kept an apartment on Perry Street, was a regular at the Bluenote, and moved in a circle of friends that included the poet Langston Hughes and pianist Glenn Gould. In 1959 she married the classical musician and music editor Leonard Marcus and helped make his celebrated career possible.

The couple would go on to raise three boys, breed champion Great Danes, and cultivate what the Berkshire Eagle newspaper once identified as the northernmost peachtree in the eastern United States, all in a unique house on Undermountain Road that she helped design. In July 1970, the newspaper published her recipe for peach shortcake which became a local favorite.

In 1974 she was diagnosed with an aggressive and malignant form of melanoma at a time when available treatments were primitive. She had radical surgery on one arm, which proved effective. However, she never wore short sleeves again.

After her marriage of 25 years ended in divorce, she took a job as an administrative assistant to the Lenox Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. She quickly rose through the ranks as the board took note of her singular leadership skills, innovative ideas, and highly successful fundraising approach. Within her first year she was elevated to the post of Executive Director, the first woman to serve in that role in the town's then 217 year history.

Among her countless achievements with the Chamber, Reimann-Marcus conceived of and created a House Tour program that, for the first time, invited members of the public to visit the historic estates and mansions for which the area had become famous in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. The tours were widely attended and provided a significant source of revenue for the town, the historic Church on the Hill and other local nonprofits. Her original program was quickly adopted by and became a model for other Berkshire chambers of commerce and local communities. News of her tours received widespread acclaim including in the New York Times and Boston Globe. Reimann-Marcus also spearheaded cooperative and collaborative communications among the various inns and tourism businesses in the area helping cement symbiotic relationships that helped elevate the seasonal

successes of virtually all local businesses.

She was also a good and devoted friend to many well into her tenth decade. Her interest and engagement in the art and music scene never waned. She was a regular at Tanglewood and The Clark Art Institute and continued to maintain rich relationships that included acclaimed musicians, artists, and journalists living in the area.

Following her son Jason Marcus' diagnosis with lung cancer, she retired from the Chamber. After his death she retreated from public life, but continued to maintain an active presence in the Lenox community, working as a community volunteer. She was an avid ornithophile, a proud member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and was known in the community for her distinctive voice and singular accent.

Reimann-Marcus was hospitalized in May following a fall in her home. She died three weeks later in Williamstown surrounded by her sons while listening to Miles Davis and Johann Sebastian Bach. In a final act of generosity, she arranged to have her body donated to the medical school at her alma mater. She also posthumously treated her sons to an intimate dinner at which they celebrated her life. A public memorial service will be announced at a later date.

She survived her son Jason Marcus, who died of lung cancer at the age of 33 in 1995. She is survived by two sons Theodore Marcus, of Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and Peter (Zoe Hagler) Marcus, of Los Angeles, and two grandsons, Eli and Charlie.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary are highly encouraged - or simply extend a hand to a

person in need.