



## Mr. Gustave G. Nelson

March 15, 1935 - September 28, 2015

Gustave G. Nelson, 80, of Kimball Farms Life Care Retirement Community Center, passed away on Monday evening, September 28, 2015 at Kimball Farms Nursing Center.

He was born in Brooklyn, NY, March 15, 1935, the son of Gustave Adolf and Frances Mae Weir Nelson. Shortly after birth, the family moved to Queens County and resided in Jamaica, NY. He was educated in the New York City Public Schools graduating from John Adams High School in South Ozone Park, NY. Continuing his education, he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree with honors from Wagner College in Staten Island. Following college he attended The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, PA earning a Master of Divinity degree.

Uncertain about his career goals he decided to explore the field of teaching and earned a Master of Arts degree from Maxwell School of Syracuse University majoring in History. He transferred to New York University and undertook a graduate program in Sociology, completing all the course work for the degree. Additional graduate studies were undertaken at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in the School of Education with a major in Higher Education.

Mr. Nelson lived in Cheshire, MA from 1967 until July 2007 when he moved to

Lenox. The same year he moved to Cheshire, he began his teaching career at Russell Sage College in Troy, NY, teaching Sociology until 1974. He then transferred to Berkshire Community College and taught courses in the Behavioral Sciences Department. In addition, he taught the History of the Holocaust and Comparative Religion in the Department of History.

Professor Nelson retired in 2001 after more than thirty seven years in the college classroom. He was known as a dedicated teacher and was extremely passionate about his teaching, especially the joy of working with mature students returning to the classroom at BCC.

A local history buff, he was a student of Shaker History and collector of antiques, especially early American and Shaker. He was especially proud of two professional awards he received during the course of his career. The Communal Studies Association recognized him for his educational leadership as director of the Berkshire Shaker Seminar, which he directed for some seventeen years. Upon his retirement, the leadership of the Shaker Seminar was assumed by Hancock Shaker Village. Proud of his association with the village, he served as a member of the Board of Overseers for many years.

While at BCC he developed and taught the course on the History of the Holocaust, which is still offered in the curriculum today. The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presented him The President's Award on June 20, 2000, in recognition of his contributions to the field of Holocaust Studies.

A member of St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Pittsfield, he served as a member of the Parish Vestry, a Lector, and as a Eucharistic Lay Minister.

On May 30, 1970, he was married to the late June Maxine Mays in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. She predeceased him on January 15,

2005.

He is survived by his two sons, David Andrew Nelson and his wife Tara of Rochester, MA and Eric Christopher Nelson of Atlanta, GA, his two grandsons, Liam John Nelson, Connor Patrick Nelson and his granddaughter, Taryn Jackson all of Rochester, and his sister, Frances Emily Nelson Cella of Henderson, NV. He will be lovingly remembered by his nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by another sister, Ellen Marjorie Nelson Bresnick late of North Babylon, BY.

#### FUNERAL NOTICE

The funeral for Gustave G. Nelson will be held on Saturday, October 3, 2015 at 9:00 AM from the Dwyer Funeral Home, 776 North St. Pittsfield, MA 01201 with a Requiem Eucharist at 10:00 AM at St. Stephens Church celebrated by the Rev. Cricket Cooper, Rector. Interment will be at a later date. Calling hours will be on Friday October 2, 2015 from 4:00 until 7:00 PM at the funeral home. The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, friends and family may choose to make donations in his memory to either, St. Stephen's Table, a program to feed the poor in our community, or to Hancock Shaker Village in care of the funeral home. DONATIONS CANNOT BE MADE ONLINE, but may be made through the Dwyer Funeral Home.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT 2. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Dwyer Family Funeral Home  
776 North Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
(413) 442-5094  
info@dwyerfuneral.com  
<https://www.dwyerfuneral.com/>

## Service

OCT 3. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
67 East St.  
Pittsfield, MA 01201

# Tribute Wall

TD

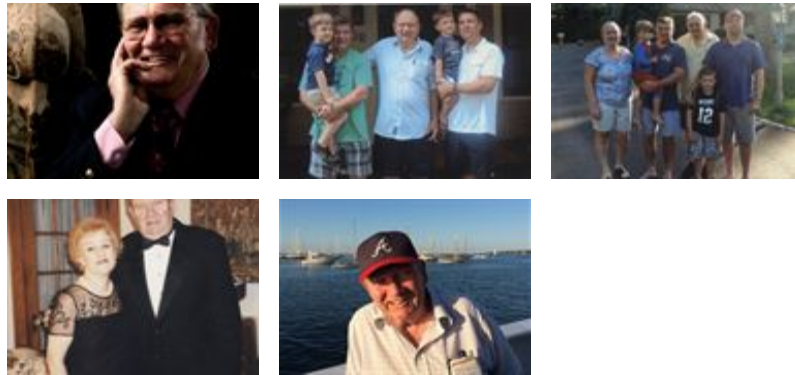
“ I am very sorry for your loss. Gus has been an inspiration for me in many aspects of my life. Gus was a professor of mine in the 1980's. He encouraged my interest in the Shakers and collecting Shaker items. Gus help me get a job at the Shaker Museum and Library. We enjoy similar tastes music. Later on we found out that we both had an interest in baseball games at Wahconah Park. We would get together before the games to have dinner and then enjoy the game. Gus also invited me to visit him at Kimball Farms, we talked about all manner of topics. Once again, I am very sorry for the loss of the important person in your lives.

With Sympathy,  
Tom Daly

Tom Daly - October 05, 2015 at 10:24 AM



“ 41 files added to the album Life Tributes



Dwyer Funeral Home Inc. - October 02, 2015 at 02:10 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mr. Gustave G. Nelson.*



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October 02, 2015 at 09:23 AM



“ *We knew Gus from his many years leading the Shaker seminar. We thank Gus for all he did to provide so many of us with great opportunities to learn more about the Shakers. His leadership, kind manners, knowledge, and the spirit he developed in his long span in the orchestrating of the Berkshire Shaker seminar provided many of us with life long friends. We will miss you Gus but memories of our friendship will never leave us.*

*Darlene and George Kohrman*

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**Darlene Kohrman** - October 01, 2015 at 04:54 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Gustave G. Nelson.*



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October 01, 2015 at 01:21 PM

TS

“ Eric and Dave, please accept my sincerest condolences! My Heart goes out to you and your family! I am so sorry for your loss!!

Tara Skerry

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**Tara Skerry** - October 01, 2015 at 03:37 AM

RH

“ We were pleased to know Gus and share our interest in the Shakers and to work with Gus on several Shaker seminars. He was a kind and gentle person and he will be greatly missed. -- With fond regards, Roger and Gail Hallr

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**roger ahd gail hall** - September 30, 2015 at 08:24 PM

JM

“ My name is Joan Sorrenti McNamara I met Gus through my best friend Frances Nelson Cella about 56 years ago. He was always kind to me and a little shy. I last saw him about 4 years ago when his sister Frances came to visit him. He treated myself and my late husband to lunch at the Olive Garden in Albany, NY. We had a nice time and talked about old times. You will be missed. Rest In Peace dear friend. I send my love and prayers to the family.

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**Joan Sorrenti McNamara** - September 30, 2015 at 06:54 PM

SP

“ I am very sorry to hear of Gus's death. He was my friend for over 30 years. Many, many times we were roommates during Friends' Weekend, conferences and other events at Sabbathday Lake, Maine, as well as during the Shaker Seminar. He shared so many stories of his life, and we had many a good laugh together. I treasure these great memories as well as the times I had at his home in Cheshire and staying at Kathy Moriarty's home in Natick as we explored the Boston Flower Show. Who could ask for better times than these? He opened many worlds for me, and made my work in the world of Shaker so much easier by his grace and guidance. He will be missed. May God have mercy on his soul, and may his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.

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**Steve Paterwic** - September 30, 2015 at 05:56 PM