



Dr. Barbara Stevens Heusel

January 12, 1935 - May 10, 2024

Barbara Stevens Heusel passed away on Friday, May 10, 2024, in Tallahassee, where she had lived since retiring in 2005 as Professor of English Emerita at Northwest Missouri State University. She is survived by her husband, Dennis Moore. In 2019, following her diagnosis of mild Alzheimer's, Dr. Moore retired early from the Florida State University English Department to serve as her full-time caregiver. They married, on the deck of the Black Dog Café, following a nearly-38-year courtship.

A native of Louisville, she is the daughter of Ruth Lydia Wiesman Stevens and Jay T. Stevens and the sister of Bonnie Stevens Lyons, of Memphis, and Sandra Stevens Bergdoll. She had started a family in Louisville with her first husband, Richard, and they had three daughters: Heidi Heusel Freeman (Rob), of Greenville, SC; Lisa Heusel-Gillig (Rick) now of Decatur, GA; and Gretchen McCathern (Eddie) now of Elliott, SC. She was the proud grandmother of Paul Gillig, Michelle Gillig, Sara Freeman Stanko and Leslie McCathern.

Dr. Heusel's undergraduate degree in 1957 is from Heidelberg College in Ohio. She earned an M.A. at the University of Louisville in 1967 and the Ph.D. at the University of South Carolina in 1983, with the support of a Mellon Fellowship. Forty summers ago she participated in the first of nine summer seminars at Cornell University led by Professor Daniel Schwarz and funded by

the National Endowment for the Humanities. She had taught for more than a dozen years at Furman University in Greenville, SC, and later taught at Wake Forest University. Upon her retirement, she agreed to teach several Women in Literature courses at Florida State.

In December 1986 Dr. Heusel, a specialist in British literature, had founded the Iris Murdoch Society in Manhattan and she served as president of this international organization, which is currently based in Britain. Dr. Heusel's publications, including two book-length studies of Murdoch's fiction and its influence, serve as the basis of much of the ongoing work on this author, who was a professor of philosophy at the University of Oxford. Four years ago, in response to the Covid crisis, Dr. Moore created the Barbara Stevens Heusel Research Fund for Early-Career Scholars, which the Murdoch Society already administers along with a matching fund to help support the scholarly work of PhD students. Recipients so far include young scholars from New Zealand, from the Sorbonne in Paris, from National University of Ireland in Galway, and from the School of Foreign Languages at Tonji University in China.

She relished the arts, nature, aerobics and travel, and since 1981 she and Moore traveled whenever possible, with trips to Ireland, England, Italy, Spain and Turkey, as well as to cities large and small throughout the United States. Whenever possible they would travel together to each other's academic conferences. In 2019, one of those scholarly organizations focusing on U.S. culture and history, the Southeastern American Studies Association, created the Barbara Stevens Heusel and Dennis Moore Graduate Student Travel Grants, recognizing her longtime participation in the group's conferences and her generosity in contributing funds to help young scholars attend and participate in the group's biennial conferences. That same year, 2019, included dinner in a train car housed in a restaurant in Eugene, Oregon, honoring Moore's early retirement from Florida State. He had retired to focus on being full-time caregiver for Dr. Heusel.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages anyone who would like to do so to make a contribution in Barbara Heusel's memory to the Alzheimer's Project, which has a "Donate Today" button at its website, <https://alzheimersproject.org>.

GREENVILLE NEWS VERSION

Barbara Stevens Heusel passed away peacefully on Friday, May 10, 2024, in Tallahassee Florida, where she lived after her retirement in 2005 as Professor of English Emerita at Northwest Missouri State University. In 2019, after receiving a diagnosis of mild Alzheimer's, she married Greenville native Dennis Moore, who retired early from the Florida State University English Department to be her full-time caregiver. Their wedding followed a nearly-38-year courtship.

A native of Louisville, she was the daughter of Ruth and Jay T. Stevens and the sister of Bonnie Stevens Lyons, of Memphis Tennessee, and Sandra Stevens Bergdoll. She started a family in Louisville with her first husband, Richard, and they had three daughters: Heidi Freeman (Rob) of Greenville, SC; Lisa Heusel-Gillig (Rick) of Decatur, GA; and Gretchen McCathern (Eddie) of Elliott, SC. She was the proud grandmother of Paul Gillig, Michelle Gillig, Sara Freeman Stanko (Caleb) and Leslie McCathern.

She earned a B.A. from Heidelberg College in Ohio in 1957 and an M.A. from the University of Louisville in 1967. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of South Carolina in 1983, with the support of a Mellon Fellowship. She taught at Furman University, in Greenville, for sixteen years and later at Queens College in London and at Wake Forest University.

Dr. Heusel was a brilliant teacher who inspired hundreds of students throughout her career. She had a passion for life, loved to laugh, and relished live bluegrass, painting and the arts, aerobics and swimming, and nature, including morning glories and the Angel Oak. She and Dr. Moore traveled to Ireland, England, Italy, Spain, and Turkey, and always enjoyed returning to their beloved Charleston.

An accomplished scholar specializing in British literature, Dr. Heusel published two book-length studies of Dame Iris Murdoch's writings. In Manhattan in 1986, Dr. Heusel founded the Iris Murdoch Society. Four years ago, Dr. Moore created the Barbara Stevens Heusel Research Fund for Early-Career Scholars, which the Iris Murdoch Society maintains, helping support PhD students whose work builds on her scholarship.

The family will be at the home of Heidi and Rob Freeman in Greenville, and a graveside service is being planned in June.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages donations in Barbara Heusel's memory to the Alzheimer's Project, <https://alzheimersproject.org>.

OBITUARY FROM BRITAIN

Barbara Stevens Heusel, who founded the Iris Murdoch Society in Manhattan in 1986, passed away peacefully on Friday, 10 May 2024, at her home in Tallahassee, Florida. She had lived there since retiring in 2005 as Professor of English Emerita at Northwest Missouri State University and is survived by her husband, Dennis Moore. In 2019, following her diagnosis of mild Alzheimer's, Dr Moore retired early from the Florida State University English Department to serve as her full-time caregiver and they married, on the deck of the Black Dog Café, following a nearly 38-year courtship.

A native of Louisville, she is the daughter of Ruth Lydia Wiesman Stevens and Jay T. Stevens and the sister of Bonnie Stevens Lyons, of Memphis, and Sandra Stevens Bergdoll. She had started a family in Louisville with her first husband, Richard, and they had three daughters: Heidi Heusel Freeman (Rob), of Greenville, SC; Lisa Heusel-Gillig (Rick) of Decatur, GA; and Gretchen McCathern (Eddie) of Elliott, SC. She was the proud grandmother of Paul Gillig, Michelle Gillig, Sara Freeman Stanko (Caleb) and Leslie McCathern.

Dr Heusel's undergraduate degree in 1957 is from Heidelberg College in Ohio. She earned an MA at the University of Louisville in 1967 and the PhD at the University of South Carolina in 1983, with the support of a Mellon Fellowship. Forty summers ago she participated in the first of nine NEH Summer Seminars at Cornell University led by Professor Daniel Schwarz. She had taught for more than a dozen years at Furman University in Greenville, SC, and later taught at Wake Forest University. Upon her retirement, she agreed to teach several Women in Literature courses at Florida State.

She took a turn serving as president of the Iris Murdoch Society, which is currently based in Britain. Dr Heusel's publications, including two book-length studies of Dame Iris's fiction and its influence, serve as the basis of much of the ongoing work on this novelist, who was a professor of philosophy at the University of Oxford. Four years ago, in response to the Covid crisis, Dr Moore created the Barbara Stevens Heusel Research Fund for Early-Career Scholars, which the Murdoch Society already administers along with a matching fund to help support the scholarly work of PhD students. Recipients so far include young scholars from New Zealand, from the Sorbonne in Paris, from the National University of Ireland in Galway, and from the School of Foreign Languages at Tonji University in China.

A brilliant teacher who inspired hundreds of students throughout her career,

Dr Heusel had a passion for life, loved to laugh, and relished live bluegrass, Tupelo honey, painting and the arts, aerobics and swimming, and nature, including morning glories and the Angel Oak, outside Charleston, SC. Since 1981 she and Dr Moore travelled whenever possible with trips to Ireland, including the Aran Islands; England, including Virginia Woolf's place in Charleston, in Sussex; Italy, including Pienza; Spain; and Turkey, including Cappadocia, as well as to cities large and small throughout the United States. Whenever possible they would attend each other's academic conferences; in 2019 one of those scholarly organisations focusing on US culture and history, the Southeastern American Studies Association, created the Barbara Stevens Heusel and Dennis Moore Graduate Student Travel Grants, recognising her long-time participation in the group's conferences and her generosity in contributing funds to help young scholars attend and participate in the group's biennial conferences.

Professor Anne Rowe, President of the Iris Murdoch Society, said, "Barbara's expertise, energy and determination was fundamental to the inauguration of the Iris Murdoch Society and her work and dedication to the cause has left an indelible mark on Murdoch scholarship worldwide. Her work in *Iris Murdoch's Paradoxical Novels* and *Patterned Aimlessness: Iris Murdoch's Novels of the 1970s and 1980s* are still key texts for all of us working on Iris's fiction, and will no doubt remain so for many years to come.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages anyone who would like to do so to make a contribution in Barbara Heusel's memory to the matching fund that Dr Moore established when he created the Barbara Stevens Heusel Research Fund for Early-Career Scholars. Details are available at the Murdoch Society's website. You can donate to the Fund via https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=JXLNT42VCCUHU – just include a note that it is for the Fund.

In the last four years a number of early-career scholars have benefitted from the Barbara Stevens Heusel Fund. To find out more about them, and their research, click the links below:

BSH Fund Fellow 2024 – Jianfeng Yue (<https://irismurdochsociety.org.uk/2023/11/13/bsh-2024/>)

BSH Fund Fellow 2023 – Camille Braune (<https://irismurdochsociety.org.uk/2022/10/20/bhs-fund-fellow-2023/>)

BSH Fund Fellow 2022 – Michela Dianetti (<https://irismurdochsociety.org.uk/2021/11/09/bsh-fund-fellow-2022-michela-dianetti/>)

BSH Fund Fellow 2020 – Arka Basu (<https://irismurdochsociety.org.uk/2020/12/10/bsh-fund-fellow-arka-basu/>)

Applications for 2025 will open later in the summer. You can find out more here: <https://irismurdochsociety.org.uk/about/the-iris-murdoch-research-centre/>

Breanna Green of Bevis Funeral Home (850-385-2193 or www.bevisfh.com) is assisting the family with their arrangements.