

THE HUDSON RIVER MUSEUM DOCENTS R E M E M B E R MARILYN BENDER



ON JANUARY 2, 2021,
THE DOCENTS OF THE HUDSON RIVER MUSEUM
LOST OUR DEAR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE,
MARILYN BENDER.



The following pages are a compilation of staff and docent
remembrances and photos from Marilyn's years at the Museum,
beginning in January of 2007,
when she joined the Museum docents.

The Docents of the Hudson River Museum have always been a vital part of our community. They are the quintessential supporters who go above and beyond in countless ways for the HRM. With the passing of Marilyn Bender, we lost a dear friend, an inquisitive and creative mind, and a strong advocate of the Museum. Marilyn had a calm and warming presence in her 13 years as a Docent. In my own experiences with Marilyn, I can attest to her quick wit as well. Whether she was working with school groups or assisting with projects that would directly affect present and future Docents, Marilyn was always willing to lend a hand and go the extra mile.

In honor of Marilyn's numerous contributions, and her own artistic endeavors in design and knitting, the Museum will be proud to dedicate a special label during March Women's History Month and throughout the spring on the beautiful painting, 'View of the Hudson Highlands with Woman Painting,' late 19th Century, by John Douglas in her honor.

Please accept my sincere condolences. The young people Marilyn inspired are her legacy, and we are proud that she chose our Museum in which to share her talents and care.

In sympathy and gratitude.

Masha Turchinsky, Director and CEO of the Hudson River Museum

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View of the Hudson Highlands with Woman Painting

John Douglas

Late nineteenth century

Marilyn was a longtime member of the Thursday group, who, with characteristic warmth, intelligence, and dry humor, contributed so much to the Museum over the years, not the least of which was her expert editing of the updated Docent Manual. It was such a pleasure getting to work with her on that project, and on so much more.

Saralinda Lichtblau, Assistant Director of Education at the Hudson River Museum

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I have worked at the Hudson River Museum since 2018, and directly with the Hudson River Museum Docents for about two years. Marilyn's calm and steady presence was evident right away, and her scholarship and thoughtful attention to detail has been of great benefit to the Museum and the work we do with the public and with schools. I am looking at our Docent Manual at this moment, and seeing her name in credits made me smile. Her contributions here will carry on into the future. I am grateful that I got to know her for a short time and will miss her.

Bridget McCormick, Manager, School Programs



DOCENT REMEMBRANCES

Marilyn was many things: a loving wife to David, mother to Roger and Douglas, and grandmother to little Mason. She was a wonderful friend, whose dry wit could always make me laugh, a super docent whose unassuming, quiet intelligence would bring out the best in her school groups, and a devoted member of the Hudson River Museum, which she loved with all her heart.

Marilyn's illness was sudden, her passing was sudden, but memories of her will remain with me forever, as they will with us all here at the Museum.

Carole Gouaux, Docent

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A fitting way to describe Marilyn would be that she exemplified a quiet excellence in all she did. Unquestionably, our docent group and program benefited from Marilyn's friendship, talents, dedication, and generosity in many respects. Her practical suggestions, such as creating a sign-up chart for our End of Year Potluck Party, made the job easier for the organizers. Accepting the Secretary position in the Docent Council brought accurate, detailed, further transparency and organization to the group.

Marilyn's most valuable contribution to docent organization, in my opinion, was updating the Docent Constitution and Bylaws to the 21st Century. Whenever the committee was in doubt of the proper or better wording of an article or section, it turned to her. We miss her!

Eva Jozsef, Docent



End of the Year Party, 2011.

Many of us were fortunate to know Marilyn through her incredible docent work at HRM, but I was even more fortunate. I spent many a Sunday morning previewing new films with her at the Westchester Cinema Club. Along with her other passions, many of my fellow HRM docents most likely are unaware that Marilyn was also a lover of film. I'd so look forward to our follow-up conversations sharing our critiques and interpretations of the film. Her insightful observations for both art in our Museum and for film will be sorely missed.

Liz Rodriguez, Docent

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Marilyn and I have worked together for many years at the Museum, but I got to know her best when she started to ask me for rides to the Museum. Those fifteen minutes together were wonderful! I learned how devoted Marilyn was to her family, how well informed she was on so many topics, and of course, I witnessed just how witty she could be.

Connie Shulman, Docent



Holiday Luncheons, 2010 and 2019.

So very sad about a dear lady like Marilyn to have died so young. I will remember her always as a talented, smart, caring and lovely lady.

She was very excited to have a grandson and looked forward to hugging, playing and kissing him. Always remember the good times and then you will heal from your loss.

Clare Feldman, former HRM Docent

I first met Marilyn eleven years ago when I started training to become a Hudson River Museum docent. She and I sat at the Thursday table, where we shared ideas and continual training. She was often quiet, but would share her thoughts and opinions when needed. We also served on the Docent Council together when she was the recording secretary. I remember her meeting notes were well-written and concise. Her quiet demeanor, wit and intelligence made up much of her character.

I also knew her through Project Linus. She introduced me to the Westchester group, and brought me to my first meeting several years ago. Her knitting ability was exquisite and flawless. The children who received her blankets were very lucky to benefit from her consistent talent. I remember when she was knitting a blanket for the arrival of her first grandchild. I believe it was a blanket with the alphabet on it.

A few of the docents would go to lunch at the Hasting Diner after our Monday meetings. We would share stories, laugh and discuss what we had learned that particular morning. The last time I saw Marilyn was leaving the diner last March. Then, COVID stepped in, and everything stopped. I have nice memories of our time together. Rest in Peace, Marilyn!

Mary Jane Cellio, Docent



End of the Year Party, 2015.

Our main goal as a docent, leading guided tours of both adults and school groups through the Museum, is to prepare for and engage our visitors in inquiry based tours. Some of the photos included here show Marilyn, other docents, curators and members of the Education Department training for these tours.



Maya Lin: A River is a Drawing exhibition training and workshop, 2018.



Field trips to MoMA in 2017 and to the Thomas Cole National Historical Site in 2019.

She was indeed a splendid person and a splendid docent.

Jack Noel, Docent

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I knew Marilyn from the very beginning of her time at HRM since I had already been a docent there for many years before she joined our group. I remember early on being awed by her interpretations and thoughts when we worked as a group examining an art object. She came up with things I never would have thought of and expanded my thoughts and feelings about the piece. She was a quiet woman, so I was surprised at first. She had an incredibly dry sense of humor and delivered her lines totally deadpan, which made them funnier still.

I had occasion not only to know her and work with her at HRM, where she was a cooperative, knowledgeable partner to work with, but also the chance to meet her at the Hastings Library the day she attended meetings of the Linus project. I was amazed at her skill. I remember that she showed me a blanket she had knitted that was to be auctioned off to benefit the Library. It was beautiful! Once again, she awed me.

Her husband David, and sons Roger and Doug were never too far away from her thoughts. She spoke of all of you often, and always with great pride: you could hear it in her voice. I remember thinking that her family was the most important part of her life. May she rest in peace and be a blessing to you. I know I will miss her. My deepest condolences.

Sara Kaminker, Docent



The Art of the Video Games exhibition training, 2014.

Marilyn's expertise, as a former history major and avid reader, came in handy when we looked for books on different historical topics. In addition, following are some photos from our Field Trips, one of which was to the New York Historical Society, where Marilyn had volunteered as a researcher for many years.



Field Trip to the New York Historical Society, 2013.



Field Trip to the Urban River at Beczak, 2014.



Field Trip to the Untermyer Gardens Conservancy, 2015.

Marilyn was truly a special and outstanding docent whom we will all miss. May she rest in peace as we go forth and continue our devotion to HRM in her memory and the memory of other docents who have passed. I have memories of several docents who are no longer with us. One of my regrets is that I didn't get to know them better, but that seems to be the way life is...not appreciating what we have until it's gone, no matter how big or small. I admired and respected Marilyn and will miss her. My condolences to her family and friends.

Richard Gerchack, Docent



End of the Year Luncheons, 2014 and 2019.

Marilyn was a calm yet quietly forceful part of the docent group. I will certainly miss her honest way of dealing with people. Thanks to all those who memorialize our gatherings. I find these images invaluable.

Lydia E. Blakely, Docent

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What great and true descriptions of Marilyn! I felt exactly the same way about her. I will truly miss her. I actually dreamt about her last night...I was telling her to wait....

Crestina Adinolfi, Docent



End of the Year Party, 2012.

It was due to Marilyn that I became involved with knitting for the Linus project. I have continued to do so until just recently, when it has been temporarily suspended while libraries close with COVID-19 illnesses increasing. I have enjoyed knitting many squares over the years which would eventually be added to others and become blankets, thanks to Marilyn and some members of the Docent group. I will miss her.

Arlene Seidenberg, former HRM Docent

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Sending thoughts and prayers to her family and friends. Marilyn was a very nice, kind woman, who was very helpful when I first started at the Museum. I will never forget her kindness.

Mary Arnone, Docent



Holiday Parties, 2010 and 2014.



End of the Year Party, 2013.

As a new docent, I did not know Marilyn very well, but from everything I've read from our docents, she sounds like a very special woman. My condolences to her family.

Annette Candido, Docent

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Marilyn offered much to our docent group, and as some of us know and have seen her beautiful work, also had a special gift for knitting, which she shared with the less fortunate. Marilyn will be missed.

Carol Avitabile, Docent

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This is sadness. A beautiful person.



Marietta Api, Docent



To Roger and Douglas—

Here's a photo of your Mom and Dad at the vigil in 2018 for immigrant justice. I was proud to stand with her...and know her.

Sue McAnanama, Docent



Docents of the Hudson River Museum, 2017.

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