



Mr. Kenneth Townsend Wright Jr.

March 8, 1933 - May 2, 2021

Kenneth Townsend Wright, Jr., 88, Professor Emeritus of Classical Studies, Sweet Briar College, died on May 2, 2021, after a brief illness. Born on March 8, 1933, in Baltimore, Maryland, he was the son of Kenneth Townsend and Margaret (Neidhardt) Wright. He grew up in Towson, Maryland, and attended Loyola High School. In 1955 he graduated from Loyola College, Baltimore, majoring in Latin. His first teaching assignment was as assistant instructor in Classical Languages and Archaeology, University of Missouri, Columbia, where he also earned his M.A. in February 1957. He completed basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia, in June 1957, earning the rank of Second Lieutenant. On June 19, 1957, he married Patricia (Smith), of Thayer, Missouri, whom he met while at the University of Missouri. In the fall of 1957, the couple moved to Philadelphia, where Ken was instructor in Classical Languages at Villanova University, while studying for his doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania. He was Assistant Professor of Classical Studies at Villanova from 1960 until 1967, when he became Associate Professor of Classical Studies at Sweet Briar College. In the summer of 1969, Ken was awarded a scholarship for study at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. He and Patricia spent many happy summers traveling in Greece and Ken worked on archaeological excavations in Israel (Caesarea Maritima, 1974) and Italy (Castelliere di S. Fedele, 1975 and 1976). Granted tenure in 1979, Ken was a dedicated and popular teacher at Sweet Briar until his retirement in 1996.

Ken taught many different courses in his department during his 29 years at Sweet Briar, including ancient history and literature, archaeology, and mythology. But his first love was teaching Latin and ancient Greek. He bristled at the widely circulated belief that ancient Greek and Latin are dead languages. He sometimes joked that “a language is dead only if it’s taught in a deadly fashion.”

In addition to his deep knowledge of Classical history, politics, and literature, Ken was a student of American history, in particular the military histories of the Civil War and World War II. When he and Patricia retired from Sweet Briar, they returned to his hometown of Towson, where they lived in a house less than a mile from his boyhood home. They filled the house with books, cared for numerous adopted cats, and did volunteer teaching and charity work. They cheered on the Orioles at Camden Yards and attended many lacrosse games at Johns Hopkins and Loyola Universities.

Ken is survived by his loving children, Katherine Baumgartner (Eric), of Redding, Connecticut, and Kenneth Townsend Wright III (Rhonda Ames), of Columbus, Ohio; his siblings, G. William Wright (Paula), of Virginia Beach, Virginia., and Margaret Rowley, of Norman, Oklahoma; and nine nieces and nephews.

On May 2, 2021 Kenneth Townsend Wright Jr. beloved husband of the late Patricia Smith Wright; dear father of Katherine Wright Baumgartner and Kenneth T. Wright III.

A Funeral Mass will be offered on Thursday, May 6th at St Ignatius Church. Interment in St. John’s cemetery Frederick MD.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Loyola Blakefield,
500 Chestnut Avenue, Towson, MD 21204.

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

MAY 6. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Ignatius
740 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Tribute Wall

KW

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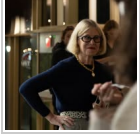


Kimberly Shaheen White - June 28, 2022 at 08:32 PM

KW

“ I cried when I heard about his death in the SBC Magazine. He is the reason I majored in Latin and Greek. We read Tacitus, Plato, Socrates, Ovid in his office. I sat in my favorite chair (which, by the way, he gave to me when he retired the year I graduated) under the circle window in Fletcher. You were the best, Professor Wright. Truly.

Kimberly Shaheen White - June 28, 2022 at 08:28 PM



“ *The Sweet Briar Magazine arrived today. I am so sad to see that Prof. Wright has passed away. He is the reason I majored in Latin. He always believed in me, even when I didn't believe in myself. I was the only one in my year entering who could scan poetry (3 different meters) and I knew he wanted me to major from the start. I declared Government and then Art History. But, he patiently waited for me declare Latin. We read Apuleius, Lucretius, Ovid and Cicero together in his office, while he smoked his pipe. He patiently rescheduled 8:30 classes on Fridays and Mondays when I couldn't get back from Hampden-Sydney. I still remember the conversation we had after Dean Lenz informed me that I was in danger of not graduating. “Come on, Lauri. Really? Fitness for Life?” When I think of my years in the Briar Patch, the memories are ALWAYS of hours spent in Fletcher in an overstuffed wing back chair next to the circular window. Ave atque vale, Mr. Wright.*

Lauri Dabbieri - November 21, 2021 at 01:56 PM