

57  
W '45

(Printed from url=https://www.ellsworthamerican.com/obituary/susan-chafee-welch/)

# Susan Chafee Welch



## SORRENTO

**Susan Chafee Welch** died peacefully at home in Sorrento on July 15, 2018. She had a brief illness for which she declined treatment. She was ready to leave this world, and died as she had lived her 91 years: with gratitude and thoughtfulness. We are thankful for the wonderful care she received from her loyal and loving helpers at home and from Hancock County Hospice.



Sue was born in Providence, R.I., on Jan. 31, 1927, to John S. and Janet H. Chafee. She was predeceased by her first husband Hunt Welch, her second husband Bud Edwards, her brother John and her sister Jan. She is survived by her three children, Tom, Hilly and Dunc, four terrific grandchildren, her sister Alex and a large extended family.

Sue graduated from Vassar College in 1947, and later took graduate classes in education from BU and Columbia University.

She taught elementary school for eight years, starting in a one-room schoolhouse in Cundy's Harbor, Maine. Later in life she tutored children with dyslexia.

Sue married Hunt Welch in 1955, and moved to Bethany, Conn., where she lived for 46 years. In the late 1970s, she and Bethany neighbors started Residents for Rural Roads to save the scenic beauty of their town. Sue was grateful to her friend and co-leader Mikey Hirschhoff, who suggested they take that idea further and write a Connecticut scenic town road statute. It became law in 1981. If you drive on a designated scenic town road in Connecticut, it is because those two women made it so.

Sue and Hunt were careful stewards of the Bethany land they loved. After Hunt died in an accident in 1989, she put most of their land under conservation easement to keep it forever undeveloped, with public access walking and horse-riding trails. Sue got

lifelong joy from athletic activity: walking, hiking, dancing and playing tennis until age 85.

Sue loved her family, her friends, this Earth and this country. She was a passionate environmentalist and concerned citizen. She was an avid reader and loved to discuss ideas and politics. She was troubled by our changing climate, overpopulation and any environmental damage. When she remarried and moved to Brunswick, she enjoyed being on the Earth care team through her church, and on that town's recycling and sustainability committee. She disliked waste and was a strong advocate for banning plastic bags. Being a child of the Depression and a New Englander, her favorite quote was: "Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without."

As for this country she loved, she kept saying: "What has happened to us?" Born into a moderate Republican family, she became a Democrat in her later years because she felt her party had left her. She stayed informed, wrote postcards and made phone calls to those we elected. She knew how important are those five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Her concerns for her family, her country and this Earth never wavered, and thankfully she kept her inquiring and caring mind until the very end. We know she wanted us to remember and learn from history, and to vote in November. And please bring your reusable bags every time you shop!

There will be a celebration of Sue's life at a later date. Her ashes will be buried with Hunt's in their beloved Bethany. Memorial gifts may be made to any Planned Parenthood, or to the Natural Resources Council of Maine, 3 Wade St. Augusta, ME 04330.