



Dale Meyers Cooper

January 24, 1922 - August 28, 2017

Shelburne Falls, MA - DALE MEYERS COOPER died peacefully in her sleep on August 28, 2017, at East Longmeadow Skilled Nursing in East Longmeadow, MA. She was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1922 to a father who was purchasing agent for a confectioner and a mother who was a talented milliner. A sickly child who managed to survive such often mortal illnesses as diphtheria and peritonitis in those pre-antibiotic days, “Googie,” as she was nicknamed by her family, built up her health by making “lemonade” from vitamin C powder deemed surplus, because the manufacturer had not yet figured out a way to incorporate it into candies without having its properties destroyed by heat.

After graduating from the famous New Trier High School in 1940, Dale worked as a model for Gloria Vanderbilt’s dressmaker and for Saks Fifth Avenue before marrying Lt., Jay Moss, USN, in 1943, a marriage that ended tragically with his death in a plane crash in 1944. Her second marriage, to Robert Meyers, a personnel director for United Air Lines, ended in divorce. The third time was the charm: her marriage to the well-known illustrator and artist Mario Cooper lasted thirty years until his death in 1995.

Dale became an outstanding artist in her own right, exhibiting her work all over the globe, having it included in numerous collections, both public and private, and winning frequent prizes and medals for her abstracted and moody yet luminous watercolors. She was the first woman elected president of Allied Artists of America, a post she occupied for many years. In 1993, she was elected President of the American Watercolor Society, serving for 10 years until her retirement, when she was made President Emeritus. She is also a full academician of the National Academy of Design and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Her work has appeared in various art magazines, including *American Artist* and *Artist Magazine*, and she is the author of *The Sketchbook*, published by Van Nostrand Reinhold. The latter was based on the many years of world travel she enjoyed with her last husband, during which she always carried a small pad to make impromptu watercolor sketches as a graphic journal of scenes that caught her eye. It was also an effective antidote to the frequent tedium of travel: Dale was not one to let idleness overtake her. Her last major adventure was a trip to Antarctica at the age of 81, undertaken after dreaming for years of following in the footsteps of Sir Ernest Shackleton, which she did, even to setting foot on Elephant Island, where Shackleton's crew endured a long and perilous wait for rescue.

One of her proudest artistic accomplishments was being commissioned by the National Gallery in Washington to paint for NASA both the 1969 Apollo moon landing and the Mars-Viking landing of 1975. The originals of her work are in the Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC,

and have been reproduced in the book *Eyewitness to Space*. She also served as an official artist for the U.S. Coast Guard.

In 2010, after illness forced her to retire from many years of teaching watercolor at the famed Art Students League in New York City, Dale came to live with her daughter and son-in-law at their farm in Buckland. She leaves behind her daughter, Dale Moss and her son-in-law, Norman Clarke. She also leaves her son Steven R. Meyers and his wife, Sally, of Alamo, CA, plus four grandchildren (Gordon Hellegers and his wife Rowen, of Nevada City, CA; Katherine Morgan and her husband Rees, of Lafayette, CA; Steven Patrick Meyers and his wife Michelle, of Pleasanton, CA; and Michael Meyers and his wife Ashley, of Dublin, CA) as well as eight great-grandchildren.

Quite apart from her talents at watercolor, Dale was known for her quick wit, her inventive solutions to all manner of household storage problems, her Scrabble and crossword puzzle skills, and her unerring eye for composition. Among her students, she was praised for being gentle yet open and honest in her critiques, which always aimed at inspiring the best work possible from those who studied with her. They felt she was able to guide them to new heights in a difficult discipline. "Value is the great stumbling block of any art," she would tell them; another potential stumbling block was learning the intricacies of composition, which she strove to help them comprehend. "It is my belief," she wrote, "that we can sharpen our senses so that we might tune in like radio receivers to the messages of nature and life around us." Being open and receptive to new experiences was one of her greatest gifts and one she managed to share with others. She could absorb the good and the bad

that life dealt her, not gloating over the former or bemoaning the latter but transforming both into objects of beauty.

She will be sadly missed not only by her family but by her many devoted friends and students. In accordance with her wishes, she will be cremated. There will be no funeral services; the family will, however, hold a rousing memorial party at some point in the future. New England funeral & Cremation Center, LLC, 25 Mill Street, Springfield, MA has been entrusted with the arrangements. www.nefcc.net