



Elston Elston

December 11, 1925 - July 19, 2016

Born in Massachusetts, raised on a farm in Virginia and designated as town artist with no training, she was offered a four-year scholarship to William and Mary College. But Yale indicated an interest as well, but required one year of prep school before attempting the four-year Bachelor degree. She brought her portfolio, fulfilled their requirements of additional language ability (she spoke French, Ukrainian and Polish) and was given a full four-year scholarship in art and architecture and graduated in three and a half years.

She received a Masters of Fine Arts degree in painting and sculpture from the University of Chicago. Her love for art and teaching and enriching the human spirit were demonstrated throughout her life. She taught at Senn High School for 29 years (some of her beautiful artwork including a hallway mural is still to be seen at Senn) and also taught at Austin, Waller, Hyde Park and Sullivan where she sponsored many of the alternative social programs and clubs that make the non-academic part of high school so enriching and so memorable. As a horseback rider from childhood she organized an equestrian club for high school students and performed with the U.S. Cavalry Re-Enactment Troop. Elston owned and rode her own Honda motorcycle and taught motorcycle safety and driving. She has flown both a single engine and twin engine Cessna and taught roller dancing. Other activities included international ballroom dancing with an incredible array of costumes, many made by her own hand. She adored Latin dancing at Truman College several days each week and at Washington and Wright Colleges. She was also a talented

jewelry maker, casting pieces in precious metal and incorporating semi-precious stones. Much of her art has been sold to private collectors as well as many corporate organizations. She had five major art shows, ran her own art academy for over 15 years and counted among her many friends hundreds of former students.

There is no doubt in the scheme of life that teachers are probably the single most important aspect of a child's journey into adulthood. The incredible number of students who have learned from and been touched by this amazing woman is attested to by the long list of former pupils who have become major forces in artistic and cultural fields and who have maintained their relationship with Elston over the years.

(Writing Credit Dick Reinsure)

Elston Elston

"I love my kids; my kids love me.

We still get together. That's the world to me."

Cemetery Details

Graceland Cemetery

4001 N Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60613

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 1. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Barr Funeral Home
6222 N. Broadway
Chicago, IL 60660
(773) 743-4034
info@barrfuneralhome.com
<https://barrfuneralhome.com/>

Service

AUG 2. 10:00 AM (CT)

St Ita Catholic Church
1220 W Catalpa
Chicago, IL 60640

Tribute Wall



“ *She was my division teacher at Sullivan from 1957 to 1961. I still have Christmas cards that she drew more than 50 years ago; they will be treasured by my grandchildren. None of what has been said about her is overstated. She was an incredibly talented, giving, kind and generous person/teacher who was very special in many ways and enriched all she came in contact with.*

Larry Brown, 1-17-25

Larry Brown - January 17, 2025 at 05:45 PM



“ *Elston Elston*

October 08, 2023 at 11:31 AM



“ *Larry Parker lit a candle in memory of Elston Elston*



Larry Parker - November 02, 2020 at 03:28 PM



“ During the 1985 to 1986 school year, I was in Ms. Elston's afternoon art class. There was a young man in the class who fancied himself to be a comedian. To be honest, he did earn himself many grins and chuckles from all of the students, including me. However, due to Ms. Elston Elston being serious to educate the class about the many rules, styles, and nuances of creating art, he was gently (yet firmly) told to stop his shenanigans. Evidently, he chose to drop her class. She didn't humiliate him in front of everyone. Instead, if I remember correctly, she had a podium upon which she would rest her attendance book and do roll call. She spoke to him there. I learned so much from Ms. Elston Elston, such as how to accurately draw the human physique, and a Mies Van Der Rohe chair. The supreme thing that I learned from her was that she genuinely cared for each and every one of her students AND that she was not going to let us give anything less than our very best. I make it a point to never say goodbye, but "See you later." I have faith that she is now taking lessons from the Supreme Artist, and that He's introducing her to color combinations she never imagined possible! Thank you, Ms. Elston Elston, for everything!

Larry Parker - November 02, 2020 at 03:23 PM

BT

I knew Ms Elston and she taught me how to paint and ride horses. I shared the Honda with her at Senn HS fond memories she was a real teacher. Thank you and we had a blast together what a hoot.I could not never forget for get the crazy thing we did
BO THOMAS

Bo Thomas - January 17, 2023 at 02:40 PM

WJ

I moved to Chicago in 1966 and there I met a young high school student, Ann-Britt Blomstedt who was still in high school at Senn. She talked about Elston Elston and I later learned more about this dynamic ,highly respected and well-liked teacher. What a legacy!

W J - June 19, 2024 at 06:11 PM

RC

“ *She was my homeroom teacher at from 1987-89 went took her division away for some dumb reason I really loved her super cool and very talented she everything I mean everything*

Rhonda Cannon - May 20, 2019 at 09:49 PM

RW

“ *I WOULD NOT BE WHO I AM IF IT WASN'T FOR ELSTON. SHE INTRODUCED ME TO HORSEBACKRIDING, PAINTING AND THE ARTS. SHE TAUGHT ME 37 YERS AGO TO TRUST MY EYES. THAT MAY NOT SEEM LIKE ALOT BUT IT IS. VANNESSA AND FAMILY I'M SO SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS. SHE WAS THE JEWEL OF CHICAGO LOVE RICHARD WAHLSTROM.*

RICHARD D WAHLSTROM - January 23, 2017 at 08:01 PM

SF

“Elston, I will always miss you. You mentoring and energy helped me understand life in an extraordinary and meaningful way. The view of the lake from your apartment just off of LSD only reflected the beauty that you delivered to us through your art and your child (now parent too).

In my heart you are not gone rather, captured inside one of your paintings still working the magic, uniquely yours that touch a note, a string, a resonance with the spirit of that which is life itself. When I close my eyes I feel that strange alchemy, yours, as I slowly vanish into your world. By virtue of the color wheel that spins with that which is alive, a branch on the canvas, not a forest, a conversation turned by hue, into an orchestra of nature, I see it, I spot it, it is you, but... where? I look again and you vanish once more, "Leonardo's use of sfumato", holds no candle it's true. Alight our imagination is now, trifled with gold and silver and light from the sun I try to carry on this mission, tradition -the art of direction- to cure what ails us and then your voice "forward we must move on". By horse back, by paint brush -easel on field what Peoria, Rockford or Chicago may yield. Come the sound of rushing air with extreme prejudice our lives changed, deeper meaning, that Elston Elston, is that what you meant? So now Elston when I see you next what projects will you have rococo Angles, the Ballet or an Eldorado for sure?

For now my friend I will not see you soon but when my evening comes I'll wait for the sunrise at Lake Michigan's gate to start again but instead of painting that picture we will play inside that art which is yours that has now become alive.

-stanley fricke

Stanley Fricke - September 07, 2016 at 03:39 PM

CB

“ Catherine Bland lit a candle in memory of Elston Elston



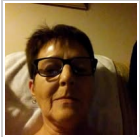
Catherine Bland - August 05, 2016 at 11:10 AM

CB

Elston Elston taught my sophomore art class at Amundsen High School back in the late 60's. The fact that, after all this time, I distinctly remember her passion for teaching and developing young talent, is a true testimony to her unique qualities and love of art. I've thought of her often over the years and appreciate all she did to encourage her students and countless others who knew her. Heaven just became a bit more lovely with this special person. Rest in peace, Ms. Elston.

Catherine Abraham Bland

Catherine Bland - August 05, 2016 at 11:22 AM



“ I never had Elston Elston as an art teacher. I knew of her and her accomplishments, I have friends who were involved with her activities, and art classes. Elston Elston you will be great missed. To her family and friends, my thoughts and prayers are with you.

Iris Barr - August 02, 2016 at 11:33 AM

CR

“ Carlton Riley lit a candle in memory of Elston Elston



Carlton Riley - August 02, 2016 at 06:53 AM

CR

“ As a student at Senn, from 1967-1971, i never had her as a teacher, **HOWEVER**, she was one of the most popular teachers there. When i attended Senn, she sponsored a Motorcycle club, & Equestrian club. i was told that after i graduated, she sponsored many more clubs, including snowmobiling, roller skating, and a **FLYING** club! Perhaps more, but those are the ones i am aware of. **SHE LOVED LIFE & LIVED IT TO THE FULLEST!** May her spirit forever live on in the lives of the thousands that had the pleasure of knowing her!

Carlton Riley - August 02, 2016 at 06:37 AM

NH

“ Ms. Elston was a Chicago treasure! She touched the lives of so many students, even decades later. Although I was never one of her students or in any club, we all knew and loved her. If you attended Senn, you had some type of interaction with Ms. Elston. We absolutely adored her spunkiness and livelihood! She was such an inspiration and will be missed dearly! I thank God that I had the honor of knowing Ms. Elston! The Class of 82 will always love and remember Ms. Elston Elston. Rest in Heaven... 🌹 Nannetta Hall



Nan Hall - August 01, 2016 at 09:18 AM

NH

“ Ms. Elston was a Chicago treasure! She touched the lives of so many students, even decades later. Although I was never one of her students or in any club, we all knew and loved her. If you attended Senn, you had some type of interaction with Ms. Elston. We absolutely adored her spunkiness and liveliness! She was such an inspiration and will be missed dearly! I'm glad God blessed her being in my life! The Class of 82 will always remember and Ms. Elston Elston.

Nan Hall - August 01, 2016 at 09:07 AM

RF

“ Our deepest condolences to Vannessa, Philip, Naomi, and Antonina. Thank you for sharing Elston with us for the last 25 years.

When Elston began attending our dance classes in the early 1990's, she brought within herself a demand for excellence and a love of learning few possess. Her love of beauty and balance (either static or dynamic) was always accompanied by an easy and natural elegance and style that she bore within her being. She was (and still is to all who remember) a paragon of life well lived.

With deepest gratitude,

*Ronald Ford and Mary Walters Ford
Chicago*

Ronald Ford & Mary Walters Ford - July 31, 2016 at 01:21 PM

SH

“ so sorry

shawn - July 27, 2016 at 10:55 PM

WM

“ *w/much Love, Dee Leo McHenry purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Elston Elston.*




w/much Love, Dee Leo McHenry - July 27, 2016 at 04:18 PM



“ *Heavenly Grace Spray was purchased for the family of Elston Elston.*



July 26, 2016 at 02:24 PM

 Ron Kesselring

“ *1 file added to the album Elston Elston: "I love my kids; my kids love me. We still get together. That's the world to me. That*



Ron Kesselring - July 26, 2016 at 01:29 AM

JS

What a wonderful video of a magnificent lady! I had the pleasure of knowing Ms. Elston from Senn High and seeing her in the Bryn Mawr neighborhood. I also had the pleasure of doing mechanical work on her Honda "Dream" motorcycle while I was the service manager at Ace Cycle World, in Chicago.

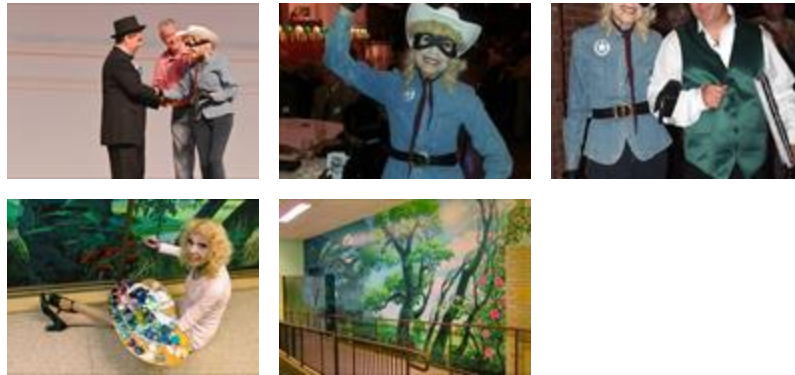
Thank you, to whomever produced this video.

John Swiderek (class of '58)

John Swiderek - June 15, 2022 at 02:04 AM

Ron Kesselring

“ 35 files added to the album *Elston's Life at Senn H.S. with her students*



Ron Kesselring - July 26, 2016 at 12:22 AM

Ron Kesselring

On behalf of the Senn HS Alumni, Ms. Elston may you RIP. You meant a lot to many that you helped throughout the years both at Senn and for years afterwards in the neighborhood. You fondly talked about your daughter and granddaughter :) I'll be forever be passing the Pink Edgewater apartment building and look as if you were still there.

Now I'll look up in the sky for your fancy art work in the clouds of heaven!

Ron Kesselring

Ron Kesselring - July 26, 2016 at 01:15 AM

KC

“ As a brother in law to Elston I marveled at the energy she put into activities for students and the productivity and variety of her personal artistic output as well as continued participation in ballroom dancing. Though spending little time in her company I was happy to know of her daughter Vannessa's constant contact and helpful attention to her mother.

*My wife and I were and did appreciate being on the mailing list for her hand wrought winter cards. Also, the www.edgewaterhistory.org has a video interview where she casually talks about her upbringing and path through teaching in Chicago. It's a virtual visit with Elston.
John and Katherine Meria*

Katherine M. Curry-Meria - July 25, 2016 at 12:02 AM



“ Ms Elston-I remember her from Sullivan High....a very kind and caring teacher for all of her students....my deepest sympathy to the family.....Rabbi Robert Rosen

Bob Rosen - July 24, 2016 at 06:36 PM

JL

“ I will always remember Elston Elston on her motorcycle. She was a lady who loved life and living to the fullest and inspiring her students to enjoy every moment. Her spirit will live on forever. May God bless you during this time of grief. Dr. Janet Lang - Administrator Nicholas Senn High School

Janet Lang - July 23, 2016 at 10:21 PM



Byron
Melgar

“ I will always remember Ms. Elston. She use to tell me to always believe in me. She said with hard work and dedication you will succeed. May God bless you My. Elston. You will never be forgotten. R.I.P.

Byron Melgar - July 23, 2016 at 11:38 AM



“ I was an art major all four years at Senn. I helped Elston set up jewelry making as part of her program there.

I remained friends with Elston and we shared many late night phone calls and she just never ceased to amaze me with her impossibly busy schedule. We talked about dogs all the time since she was busy training her granddaughter's dog on Thursdays...

She influenced my life in so many different ways and on so many levels even as recently as last year.

*Truly, she was a Grand Lady.
Rest ye now, Elston. I will never forget you.*

Betsy Field-Connelly, Class of '75

Betsy Field - July 23, 2016 at 09:45 AM

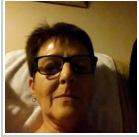


MI

“ Elston Elston had a profound effect upon me during my four years of high school. I was a member of the Senn Equestrian club, president my last year. I will always remember her kindness and support. I too became a teacher and no doubt her influence on me came through in my classroom. My condolences to Vanessa and family.

Michelle Harvey Scheinkopf 71-75 Senn HS

michelle - July 23, 2016 at 09:45 AM



“ *Elston Elston will be dearly missed. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, and all the alumni. Iris Barr 75-79 Senn HS*

Iris Barr - July 22, 2016 at 07:18 PM



“ *Elston Elston was a wonderful, artistic, neighborly person. She contributed to the massive art work under the viaducts at Bryn Mawr and Foster Avenues. She was a friend of many of us in the Edgewater area and I treasured the Christmas cards she sent. An Edgewater Treasure award was given to her by the Edgewater Historical Society. She came to our opening and to some other events (especially the artistic ones). We will miss her. Our love and condolences to her family.*

Betty and Ara Mayian from Sun City West, Arizona.

Betty Mayian - July 22, 2016 at 07:13 PM