

OBITUARY

June 11, 2008

ANNE C. MARTINDELL

Anne Clark Martindell, a politician and diplomat who played an important role in enhancing U.S. relations with New Zealand, died Wednesday, June 11, 2008 at University Medical Center at Princeton. She was 93.

Ms. Martindell, a conventional mother and housewife for the first half of her long life, broke into government and politics at the age of 56 and developed a remarkable career that she chronicled in a book published last month titled "Never Too Late."

Landmarks in her late-blooming career included her graduation from Smith College at the age of 87, an event so unusual that it was the topic of an NBC Today Show segment and a half-page article in The New York Times. That educational achievement, celebrated by Smith not only with a bachelor of arts but also with an honorary doctor of laws, came after years of work as a politician in New Jersey and as a diplomat during the Presidencies of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.

Ms. Martindell was born in the Plaza Hotel in New York City, the daughter of Marjory Blair Clark, a railroad heiress, and William J. Clark, a lawyer and later judge of the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals. In her memoir, Ms. Martindell described her early life as sheltered, herself as shy, and life in the New York debutante world as "conventional". Although she entered Smith as a member of the Class of 1936, she reported that her father was shocked to learn after her freshman year that she planned a legal career and he insisted that she leave Smith to marry, which she did at age 19.

Nearly 30 years later, Ms. Martindell launched her career as an elementary school teacher and charity and political fundraiser in Princeton. Appointed vice-chairperson of the New Jersey Democratic Party in the 1960s, she drew media attention when her all-male colleagues attempted to bar her attendance at a strategy meeting, ostensibly because her presence would inhibit them for using language that might offend a woman, to which she replied, "I don't give a _____ what kind of language you use."

In 1973, Ms. Martindell was elected to the New Jersey State Senate where she served on its appropriations and education committees until 1977.

She was among the first New Jersey politicians to endorse Jimmy Carter for President and, after her single term in the State Senate, she moved to Washington to work in his administration. She served as director of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance of the Agency for International Development for the first two years of Carter's term in office, and then was nominated and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as ambassador to New Zealand. She served three years in that post.

Ms. Martindell's love of New Zealand lasted the rest of her life. In 1986, concerned about deterioration in U.S.-New Zealand relations, she founded a new organization, the United States—New Zealand Council, to promote understanding and friendship. At the time, relations between the two countries was strained by New Zealand's decision to bar American Navy vessels from its ports on grounds that they might be carrying nuclear weapons. The Council active to this day, lists Ms. Martindell as chairman emeritus. Ms. Martindell also discovered in New Zealand a man she described as "the love of her life," prominent painter Sir Toss Woollaston, and they enjoyed a trans-world romance until he died in 1998.

Ms. Martindell was married to the late George C. Scott, Jr., of Richmond, Virginia. The couple had three children, Marjory, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, George C. Scott III, of Richmond, and David C. Scott, of Princeton. Her fourth child, Roger Martindell of Princeton, was born during her second marriage, to the late Jackson Martindell, publisher of Who's Who of America.

In addition to her children, Ms. Martindell is survived by nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to: U.S. - New Zealand Council, 1801 F Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006; North Country School/Camp Treetops, PO Box 187, Lake Placid, NY 12946; The Carter Center, Atlanta, GA; and Smith College, Gift Accounting Unit, 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063.

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