

Stephen Hall Grant Obituary



Stephen H. Grant, 84, of Arlington, Virginia, passed away peacefully at home on April 12, 2025.

A retired Foreign Service Officer, Steve led a life marked by global service, scholarship, and a deep appreciation for the arts.

Born in Boston, Steve graduated from Noble & Greenough School in Dedham, MA, and later from Amherst College, in Amherst, MA. He earned a masters degree from Middlebury College, VT, following a formative year at the Sorbonne in Paris. He completed his doctorate at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, specializing in international education.

Stev's career began with the Peace Corps, teaching in Sassandra, Ivory Coast. He went on to consult for the Academy for Educational Development, with assignments in Washington, D.C., and Abidjan, Ivory Coast. His distinguished tenure with USAID included posts as education and training officer in Ivory Coast, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, and El Salvador, as well as in Washington, D.C. headquarters. He also worked as an educational consultant for UNESCO in Paris and Abidjan. In Massachusetts, he was certified to teach and spent five years in the classroom.

An avid historian and author, Steve published three books of social history using vintage picture postcards, highlighting life in Indonesia, Guinea, and El Salvador. His work was featured in USAID FrontLines.

In retirement, Steve volunteered as a senior fellow at the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) in Arlington from 2004 to 2018, where he edited oral histories and diplomatic memoirs and lectured on African culture at the Foreign Service Institute. His biography Peter Strickland (New Academia, 2007) was recognized as an "ADST-DACOR Diplomats and Diplomacy Book," with a launch at DACOR and forewords by Ken Brown and Michael Ely. His second biography, *Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), brought to light the lives of the founders of the Folger Shakespeare Library and was the subject of a Newberry Cultural Series Lecture at DACOR.

Steve was deeply involved in his community, particularly through Arlington Neighborhood Village, where he spoke to Aging-in-Place groups about how he modified his beloved 1926 Arlington home of which he was only the second owner.

Music was a lifelong joy. From church choirs to Gilbert & Sullivan operettas and double-quartet harmony in high school, Steve's voice carried across continents. At Amherst, he sang in the Chapel Choir and toured Europe with the Smith-Amherst Chamber Singers, performing in Chartres Cathedral, a candle-lit Renaissance theater in Vicenza, and enjoyed post-concert

spaghetti with Gian Carlo Menotti in Spoleto. He later performed Carmina Burana in an 1821 Dutch opera house in Jakarta and sang with Encore Creativity's senior chorale in Washington, D.C., as well as on tours through Canada, Cuba, the Danube, and the Mediterranean.

Steve is survived by his children, Yonel and Sylviane; his granddaughter, Gabriela; his partner, Abigail Wiebenson; and his former spouse, Annick.