

COMMUNITY LOSES A LEADER DEVOTED TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Anita Fouilhox Houston, Chair of New Canaan's UN Study Group and active as a volunteer in the community for many years, died Friday, March 16, 2007 at the Norwalk Hospital.

Mrs. Houston, a resident of New Canaan since 1947, was 94 years old and remained actively involved in community affairs until shortly before her death which followed a brief struggle with cancer.

She was born in Portland, Oregon in 1912, daughter of Jean Clark Fouilhox and the architect Jacques Andre Fouilhox. Her father, a partner in the firm of Hood & Fouilhox and later Harrison & Fouilhox, designed Rockefeller Center and the Perisphere and Trylon of the 1939 World's Fair, among his significant projects.

Mrs. Houston attended Kent Place School in Short Hills, New Jersey and later graduated from Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania where she majored in foreign affairs. When she was in her 20's she lived in Geneva, Switzerland for a short time and studied international relations at the Graduate Institute of International Studies (HEI).

She and her husband, the late Isaac Hayne (Ike) Houston, raised their four children on Lambert Road in New Canaan, Connecticut. Mr. Houston, a businessman and later a vice president at Citibank in New York City, died in 1995.

During her 60 years in New Canaan, Mrs. Houston was active as a volunteer for the Democratic Party and various organizations which supported the United Nations. She served as co-chairman of the UN Hospitality Committee and most recently chaired the UN Study Group, a position formerly held by Jean Walser.

For several decades she was a member of the town's UN Day Committee twice serving as its chairman. In October of 2002, the fall of her 90th birthday, at a ceremony at the Town Hall, Mrs. Houston was honored on UN Day. She was presented with a plaque by the town of New Canaan appointing her as its "Ambassador for World Affairs." The plaque read in part "Given in recognition of her half century of unique service in drawing this community closer to the rest of the world, especially to the personnel and activities of the United Nations."

As David S. Brown, MD, noted in a recent letter to the editor of this paper "she's fixed the United Nations firmly in most New Canaan minds."

An indomitable woman, she hosted every spring the annual UN Hospitality Committee's lecture at her house. This consisted of a picnic on the lawn and a talk by a distinguished speaker on global affairs with many UN staff and their families attending. There would then be a question and answer period led by Mrs. Houston. As one of the participants noted "She always made you think."

Among the many causes about which she was outspoken was the need for the US to pay the dues owed by them to the UN. She was interviewed on CNN as a spokesperson for the New Canaan initiative that proposed having each person in the United States send in \$2.60, their share of the US debt to the UN, as a way to call attention to our UN debt. Indeed, New Canaan Connecticut had the highest percentage of contributors to this project of any town in the country. Several members of the US Congress reacted usefully to the message and the debt settlement was spurred.

Mrs. Houston also sparked the community's joint effort with the UN to finance clearing minefields in war torn countries. Consequently,



Anita Houston delivering the "News of the Week in Review" at the Waveny Care Center in New Canaan.

scores of other cities and towns in this country and Canada followed New Canaan's lead.

Recently she was also a leader in New Canaan's underwriting of the startup of two schools for young women in the Province of Badakhshan in Afghanistan. Now in its second year, the 500 young women who had been denied schooling under the Taliban rule will soon complete their "catch up" efforts and be placed in the restored Afghan school system.

Until shortly before her death, she traveled each week to Waveny Care Center in New Canaan to deliver the "News of the Week in Review."

Surviving are a son, Andre Fouilhox Houston of Washington, D.C.; three daughters, Katherine Houston Bradford of New York, NY, Jean Clark Houston of Portland, Oregon and Marianna Houston also of New York, NY., six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

A funeral will be held at St. Aloysius Church in New Canaan on Thursday, March 22nd at 10 AM.

Memorial contributions may be made to the UN Committee of New Canaan, 107 Lambert Road, New Canaan, CT. 06840.