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Joan Tweedy, 100, Philanthropist, Especially to Conservation Organizations, Avid Photographer

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Date : December 24, 2018

Joan Ordway Livingston Tweedy, a philanthropist and avid conservationist instrumental in advancing the work of the Wildlife Conservation Society, The Nature Conservancy, and Planned Parenthood, died peacefully at home in Darien on Dec. 22. She was 100 years old, a life well lived.

It was Mrs. Tweedy's long-time interest in conservation that encouraged her to play a leading role with WCS and the Bronx Zoo.

Her many activities at the Bronx Zoo (for which she held a special affinity) included endowing the 6.5 acre Bronx Zoo's Congo Gorilla Forest Exhibit with the iconic and intimate gorilla-viewing area, and the Joan

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O.L. Tweedy Giraffe Savannah where the dedication plaque honors her “lifetime commitment to preserving wildlife and animal habitats for future generations.”

— [an obituary](#) from *Edward Lawrence Funeral Home*

She also supported the Bronx Zoo’s Tsingy Cliffs, Observation Station and Tortoise Nursery, in the Madagascar! exhibit. “Her support and partnership helped bring these groundbreaking exhibits to life when they were but a vision” said Cristián Samper, president and CEO of the organization.

Mrs. Tweedy served as a member of the WCS’s leadership for 25 years, and one of her hands-on partnerships included banding penguins in Patagonia.

Her lifelong belief in the importance of conservation also led to her support of both the Connecticut and national chapters of the Nature Conservancy from its infancy more than six decades ago.

The historic “Kelda” land deal in western Connecticut, The Preserve in Essex/Old Saybrook and the Komodo National Park in Indonesia were among the projects advanced by her participation.

Closer to home, she was involved in the formation of the New Canaan Nature Center and later the expansion of the Darien Nature Center.

Among other philanthropic causes, she was a charter donor of the award-winning sustainable state-of-the-art Kroon Hall building at the Yale University School of Environmental Studies, which was dedicated in 2009 as the focal point of environmental innovation at the university.

Her support for Planned Parenthood of Southern New England for over 30 years, particularly its mission in Connecticut, resulted in her being honored with the organization’s 2012 Community Impact Award and lead to establishment in 2014 of the Stamford Planned Parenthood Center.

Born on Dec. 17, 1918, in St. Paul to Mildred and Samuel Ordway, she grew up in New York City, where she graduated from the Chapin School. She married Robert Cambridge Livingston in 1942 and was a resident of New Canaan, where the couple lived with their four children for 25 years, before moving to Darien after Mr. Livingston’s death in 1974.

In 1982, she married Richard Burr Tweedy, a former director of the Stamford Hospital and president of the Stamford Bar Association. The union enlarged her family with four stepsons. Mr. Tweedy died in 2007.

Joan Ordway Livingston Tweedy, affectionately called “Muguet,” was an avid photographer, skilled at

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capturing intimate moments. To her many friends and tight-knit extended family, she was best known for her joy and adventure in life, her inclusive personality, and her self-deprecating sense of humor, all of which persisted or increased despite the many passing years.

Mrs. Tweedy is survived by two sons: Philip Livingston, MD, and his wife, Lucy Hann, MD, of New York City and South Carolina; and Robert “Chico” Livingston, MD, and his wife Lynne, of Santa Fe, NM; and two daughters: Millie Livingston of Seattle; and Patricia Livingston and her husband, the artist Tom Gottsleben, of Saugerties, New York.

She is also survived by a brother, Gilman Ordway of Jackson Hole, Wyoming; two stepsons: David Tweedy, and his wife, Ellie, of Brooklyn, New York; and Jim Tweedy and his wife, Meg, of Darien.

She had 25 grand-, step-, or great-grandchildren and was predeceased by her sister, Dorothy Mills of Greenwich; and by two stepsons: Richard Burr Tweedy, Jr. of Boston; and Jon Tweedy of New York City.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m., Jan. 26 at the [First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan](#), with a reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the [Wildlife Conservation Society](#).