



Michael Jefcoat

November 18, 1946 - September 4, 2023

Michael Jefcoat of Laurel, Mississippi, died Monday, September 4, 2023. He was 76. He is survived by his wife of forty-five years, Evelyn.

After earning his bachelor's degree from The University of the South, Michael continued his studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. While there, he was chosen by faculty to teach in a French school and spent a year in Paris, France, where he lived on the West Bank. He later returned to Laurel and founded Jefcoat Enterprises.

Michael was a voracious reader and patron of the arts. He and Evelyn traveled extensively, exploring art and architecture around the world. Their travels shaped his study of landscape architecture and gardening. Together, they sponsored the curation of numerous art exhibits and the publication of many books on gardens, art, and architecture, including *The Library of America's Welty: Stories, Essays, and Memoir*. A letter of Michael's to Eudora Welty sparked efforts to restore the garden at her home, and he later served on the board of the Eudora Welty Foundation. Michael was also instrumental in efforts to restore the grounds at Rowan Oak, William Faulkner's home. He served on the board and as president of the Library of American Landscape History. He also served on the board of the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art. His own personal garden gained the distinction of being listed in the Smithsonian registry.

Michael approached every aspect of his life and work with passion. He was kind, generous, and quick to pen an encouraging note to those he loved.

If you wish to honor Michael's memory, you may make a contribution to the Eudora Welty Garden online at eudorawelty.org/contribute or by check to the Eudora Welty Foundation, Post Office Box 55685, Jackson, Mississippi 39296-5685; the Library of American Landscape History; or the Lauren Rogers Museum of Art. A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

To sign the online guest book, visit www.memorychapellaurel.com.

Tribute Wall

RS

“ *The University of Mississippi Museum and its historic landmark literary site, William Faulkner's Rowan Oak, will remain ever indebted to the Jefcoats' dedication to the grounds and historic landscape of Rowan Oak, and for their thoughtfulness extended always so graciously. Michael, you will be remembered forever here in Oxford and at the University Museum, warmly and with profound appreciation.*

Robert Saarnio - September 18, 2023 at 10:14 AM

SS

“ *We were deeply saddened when we heard of Michael's passing. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Evelyn.*

*He was a very unique man, very kind. He will be missed.
Sybil & Lamar Skinner*

Sybil & lamar skinner - September 17, 2023 at 07:27 PM

CW

“ *Dearest Michael will be greatly missed by his friends and I have been honored to be one of them. He will live on in my consciousness forever. He was an exceptional person. I send love and respect to Evelyn, his wife and soul mate. Rest in Peace dear friend, Cynthia Walker*

cynthia walker - September 13, 2023 at 10:19 PM