

TRIBUTE TO DIXIE

PAT SMITH, BROOKLYN, NY

I was at a Three Pier show in New York, looking at some souvenir buildings, although I then didn't collect them, when a man came up and said, "Do you collect them?" Well! He introduced himself as Bill Trainer and explained about the society. He, or more probably Dixie, sent me a notice of that first meeting in New York at the Rainbow room.

There I met Dixie who graciously introduced me around. That same summer she invited me and several other New York collectors to a Sunday lunch at their house in Connecticut. I wondered about being so new and being invited, but it was her way of including me in the society. And from then on, Dixie was the person in the society to whom I most related.

She loved lighted kitschy buildings. I hated them, but whenever I ran across one in a catalog or on Ebay, I sent it to her. I know she bought at least one.

We were of the same age, same background, with many of the same interests other than collecting little buildings. She encouraged me to contribute to the newsletter and at one point tried to persuade me to take it over. Nope. I'd had my 40 years of newsletters. She did a far better job with the newsletter than I would have. And Randy carries on.

We will miss her.

**LYNETTE AND ALAN RAUCH
HOUSTON, TX**

In our early days of collecting souvenir buildings, it was all about finding them. As time went on, getting to know our fellow members became an equally important and gratifying experience. It was no more so than meeting Dixie, the vital force behind the organization. We have read that the days of your life are not as important as the life of your days. Her days were certainly lively, gracious and generous as she was.

We will remember her

**DICK BARAK
ST. FRANCIS, MN**

My first contact with Dixie was in June 1995. I called to inquire about joining the SBCS. We had an instant rapport. This was due to her warm and friendly manner, and her genuine affection for other collectors. All of the members of the SBCS who have had the opportunity to meet Dixie have all shared this same experience.

A collector in India, Chandra Mohan, when informed of her death said to me "Oh God! This is a shock to me. She was so kind to share so many of her buildings with me...I can never forget her".

And we won't forget her either. She cannot be replaced, only fondly remembered with affection.



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**PAUL CROWTHER
SEATTLE, WA**

On Christmas Day I was in two places at once. My mother's charm bracelet took me to both. I was there in Houston as my mother explained each charm's milestone to my new sister-in-law. My brothers and I are there; I'm the bassinet. There are even a few to delight the building collector. There's the Alamo representing my father's Air Force service there and their eventual home. My birthplace is represented by the Astrodome. But as the charms jangled, my thoughts took me to Nellysford, Virginia where I knew Dixie was wrestling with pancreatic cancer.

The sound of the silver building charms on her necklace let you know she was nearby. But more likely, long before you heard the charms jingle, you heard her remarkable laugh announce her arrival. Her ready laughter, and the warmth and openness it conveyed, were high points of many a SBCS convention.

Along with her warmth there came a delight in building replicas and a fascination with their full-scale counterparts. Years ago, when she learned of one of my recent finds, the Dinosaurium in Wyoming, she encouraged me to undertake a writing assignment for the newsletter. She was truly intrigued by it and wanted other collectors to know its tale.

Indeed, she was just as excited by the discoveries of others as she was in her own. Her help in creating the SBCS was an extension of that excitement and passion for collecting. She helped create a collection of people in the process, and that is a remarkable legacy.

As much as my mother's charm bracelet is a record of our family's history, Dixie's necklace was a record of a passionate collector and traveler. She and Bill's many adventures together made a joyful noise when translated into metal. I am forever grateful that their paths crossed mine through the SBCS.

How can we remember Dixie? With laughter and tears certainly and perhaps with a dangling of charms. Maybe within the gentle clink of metal to metal, there will be the soft echo of her laugh. And that will be a comforting sound.

**BOB KNEISEL, PASADENA, CA**

I remember Dixie Trainer as the woman who first brought us all together with her graceful charm and "can do" attitude. Dixie volunteered to put out the first SBCS newsletter which linked all of us collectors in the club. And our club is different from many. We're endlessly good natured about getting together and sharing. And we don't take ourselves too seriously. We have Dixie to thank for our good behavior. She's the one who started us off that way, and it's stuck.

My favorite story about Dixie is when she handed me a large cake shaped like the Chrysler Building, and asked if I'd carry it up to the Rainbow Room in Rockefeller Center. This started when Bill dropped us off at the curb, and we carried all the 1993 pre-convention goodies, flat cake pan included. I never knew there were so many steps in Manhattan or the elevator doors, which tried to crush the cake between the doors repeatedly. Somehow Dixie managed to steady the cake I held, so that it arrived intact at the Rainbow Room. We were both relieved, and I think a little surprised that we had pulled it off.

Dixie was very good at what she did, whether it was passionately collecting, running a business (selling souvenir buildings) or publishing the newsletter that began our club. She did it all with style and a warm sense of humor that was infectious. Let's hope that we can all try to be a little like Dixie in everything we do.

**HOWIE GELBTUCH
BEDFORD, NY**

The San Francisco Convention was the first one I attended. Until then, I had communicated with and bought souvenir buildings from many members, including Dixie. But I had never met anyone in person. As a result, I didn't really know any collectors at the convention. On one of the first bus rides of that day, Dixie announced that she was going to sit next to me, and I felt warmly welcomed into the world of souvenir building collecting.