

Love of Travel

INSPIRES BEQUEST

By the time they met on a ship leaving Hoboken, N.J., for Rotterdam in the Netherlands, Susan Brand Piepho and the late Edward Lee Piepho were already well traveled. Susan (Grad '70) had attended the International School in Geneva and had explored France, Italy and Germany, and Lee (Grad '72) had seen much of the United States.

Halfway through the 10-day crossing of the north Atlantic, stormy weather incapacitated most of their fellow travelers, but Lee and Susan proved immune to the rolling of the ship, and struck up a conversation in the nearly empty dining room. Several wave-challenged games of shuffleboard ensued and, by the time they reached Rotterdam, they had arranged to meet later in Paris.

As rising college juniors in June 1962, Susan spent the summer with distant relatives, improving her German language skills, while Lee enjoyed a “gentleman’s grand tour,” driving around Europe in a green VW convertible with a friend.

“For me, it was my education,” Lee Piepho said of the experience. “I learned about art, culture and an awful lot about life.” The Piephos spent years exploring together after that.

After college, the couple married and began graduate studies at Columbia University, receiving master’s degrees in their respective fields — Susan in science education and Lee in Renaissance literature. While in New York, Lee was inspired to pursue doctoral studies at UVA after attending a lecture given by Robert Langbaum, now the James Branch Cabell Professor of

English, emeritus. A year later, Susan likewise decided to pursue her doctorate in physical chemistry at UVA under the guidance of professor Paul N. Schatz. They fondly remembered their time at “Mr. Jefferson’s Academical Village” and the collegiality among the faculty and graduate students.

The late Edward Lee Piepho (Grad '72) and Susan Brand Piepho (Grad '70) met during a trip to Europe as college students and made an estate gift to UVA to fund scholarships for students wishing to study abroad and for deserving UVA undergraduates from Amherst County, Virginia.



In 2010, the Piephos included the University in their estate plan, establishing a bequest to endow two need-based scholarships. The first scholarship, the Susan B. and Lee Piepho Scholarship Fund, is for students from Amherst County, Virginia., where the Piephos enjoyed teaching college-age students for the majority of their academic careers. “We want to provide lasting support for Amherst County residents who wish to attend the University and earn their undergraduate degree without incurring student debt,” Susan Piepho said.

In keeping with their love of travel, the second scholarship, the Susan B. and Lee Piepho International Scholarship Fund, supported undergraduate and graduate students interested in studying abroad.