



# MARY BARTLETT BUNGE

APR 3, 1931 - FEB 17, 2024



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 5
<b>Media</b> .....	Page 12



# MARY BARTLETT BUNGE

APR 3, 1931 - FEB 17, 2024

**T**wo celebrations of Mary's life will be held.

The first will focus on her scientific work, and will be held at the Miami Project, where Mom worked for almost 30 years. It will take place Friday, June 7, from 10 am - 4:30 pm at the Lois Pope Life Center in downtown Miami (1095 NW 14th Terrace). A Zoom link will be available shortly before the date.

The second celebration will happen at the Coral Gables Congregation Church (3010 De Soto Blvd.) on Saturday, June 8, at 3 pm, with a reception to follow. A Zoom link will be available shortly before the date.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to:

--The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis

The Project continues its mission to help paralyzed people to regain function. Mary endowed two annual lectureships at the Project, one in her husband's name and one in hers. These lectures have been taking place for almost 20 years. The lecture in Mary's name is given by a prominent female neuroscientist and includes a mentorship talk for women in science at the university.

<https://www.themiamiproject.org/donate/>

--The University of Wisconsin at Madison

Mary and her husband Richard met at UW in graduate school and Mary has endowed the Richard P. and Mary Bartlett Bunge Neurobiology Scholarship there for an undergraduate student in neurobiology from rural Wisconsin. Mary chose a rural student because Richard came



## Obituary

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from rural Wisconsin and Mary saw the wonderful impact that being at UW Madison had on Richard. The first recipient received her scholarship for the current academic year.

[www.supportuw.org/giveto/BungeMemorial](http://www.supportuw.org/giveto/BungeMemorial)

Mary received an obituary in the New York Times:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/04/science/mary-bartlett-bunge-dead.html>

She also received a remembrance from her longtime employer, The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis:

<https://www.themiamiproject.org/bunge-memorial/>



## Tribute Wall

**MARY BARTLETT BUNGE**

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BE

**Becky** posted:

Mary and Dick were always so welcoming to our family. They hosted our family during my husband David's terminal illness. We kept in touch, though for the most part we lived in separate countries, and I always looked forward to learning about Mary's contributions and advances in the medical field. Mary and Dick were very supportive of my son Paul as he entered the medical field and to my daughter Sarah in her high school years. At my 25th wedding anniversary to my second husband, Mary very kindly presented a beautiful speech and an original poem to honour us at our celebration. Not only was Mary an exceptional scientist but she was a great poet as well! It was a privilege to have been a part of Mary's life.

June 5 at 9:30 PM

AL

**Allison** posted:

I have many fond memories of visiting with Aunt Mary and always enjoyed receiving greeting cards from her - half the fun was trying to decipher what in the world she had written. Our family's last visit with Aunt Mary was in March 2022 at her beautiful apartment in Florida. She and J had a long discussion about her scientific work and career, as well as possible educational paths for J. J was inspired to focus on bioengineering based largely on Aunt Mary's history and prognosis of the future opportunities for J in the scientific world. The following year, J applied to engineering programs and was accepted into her first choice, where her major is bioengineering!

May 31 at 12:52 AM



## Tribute Wall

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SB

**Sarah Bunge** posted:

My first memories of Uncle Dick and Aunt Mary were way back in the 1980s when we visited their house in St. Louis. I loved playing with, or trying to anyhow, their Siamese cats. The love Uncle Dick and Aunt Mary displayed toward our family was exceptional. Most of us already know how Dick and Mary selflessly dedicated their research careers to cure those suffering from paralysis, but far fewer know how much the couple was willing to sacrifice for the love of those dear to them. When my father David (Dick's brother) was diagnosed with Leukemia, Uncle Dick volunteered to donate his own bone marrow in hopes of curing my father. Although the bone marrow transfusion was ultimately unsuccessful, our family will never forget how much love and care Uncle Dick and Aunt Mary shared with us during those difficult years. Later on, in my high school years, my benevolent aunt and uncle helped to pay for my private schooling which was essential for my academic success and helped me later achieve a Master's level education. In my adult life, I always felt so grateful whenever I had the opportunity to interact with Aunt Mary. I admired her appreciation for books, her dedication to science and her openness to embrace all of life's opportunities, even in older age. I am thankful Aunt Mary is celebrated by so many family members, colleagues and friends and that her legacy of helping others will continue through The Miami Project.

May 28 at 6:54 PM

LS

**Lamya Shihabuddin** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

I first met Mary and Dick when I joined the Miami project as a foreign graduate student. With their warmth and hospitality, Mary and Dick made the Miami project as a family and we were home away from home. Mary was my mentor, role model, colleague and friend. From discussion science and learning electron microscopy and how synapses look under EM to sharing life lessons, she was an inspiration for me and many women in science. Her dedication and enthusiasm for research was contagious. She was always there for me both professionally and personally issues and for that I will be eternally grateful. Throughout the years our friendship flourished and Mary became our family friend. For the past decade we got to spend time with Mary at the Vineyard, where she hosted us, making dinners, sharing long chats, enjoying long walks, and watching the sunset. Will always deeply cherish these memories and our times together! Mary deeply touched and shaped many lives including mine and her spirit will live through all of us!



May 26 at 3:22 PM



# Tribute Wall

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SW

**Scott Whitemore** posted:

I met Dick and Mary in the early 1990s when they first interviewed to lead the Miami Project. Their scientific and administrative leadership shaped my scientific development. While I greatly valued that mentorship, it was their humanity and friendship that influenced me the most. I continued to collaborate with Mary long after I left Miami. Her rigorous science was the foundation of those publications. As she was an external advisor for our Center for nearly 20 years, I saw firsthand the amazing effects she had on our graduate students, especially the females, as a role model and mentor. She always made time to meet with them. Her influence on them will be manifested in their trainees as well. Interestingly, my personal path to becoming a neuroscientist began during my undergraduate studies (1980) after using this really cool Cell Biology paper by Mary and Dick of neural cell culture and electron microscopy as the basis of my honors project. I would not have had the career I had without that paper. The scientific lights of Dick and Mary Bunge will continue to glow for multiple generations of scientists. Scott Whitemore

May 21 at 8:49 AM

ES

**Erika Suazo** lit a candle in honor of MARY.

Dr. Bunge was a woman I admired and will always do. She always shared her wisdom, and she taught me so many things professionally as well as personally. I will always remember, "it is what it is".



May 17 at 10:00 AM

JG

**James Guest** posted:

My experience with Richard and Mary Bunge had a major impact on my career. Dick and Mary had exceptional powers of observation and Mary's artistic nature rendered her work consistently visually stunning. Mary introduced me to great art in many cities and through them I met many scientists that became friends. Well into her 80s, Mary could lead lab meetings with her wit and rigorous intellect. Both deeply inspired me to contribute to treatments for nervous system injury, significantly by their example.

March 27 at 5:08 PM

SU

**Susana** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Picture from Mary Bunge's retirement event at the Miami Project, with former members of her laboratory.



March 26 at 6:52 PM



## Tribute Wall

**MARY BARTLETT BUNGE**

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MO

**Martin Oudega** posted:

Mary was truly a remarkable person and scientist. During my years of working with Mary I have learned so much about life, people, being humble, being appreciative, being strong, and, yes, about science. As so many others before and after me, I also sat on her couch and discussed the latest findings, new ideas, and, often, life issues that were important. She was a very patient listener. I have fond memories of those hours in her office. They have contributed to the way I do science, and the way I stand in life. I think all who sat on that couch have benefited from her insightful ideas and advice, and from her powerful human spirit. There was a strength in Mary that was unparalleled. I may only wish that some of that strength rubbed off on me, on us. And if not, Mary's spirit will be for always an inspiration.

March 22 at 6:48 AM

WB

**Wendy Beukelman** posted:

Aunt Mary was such an inspiration to me. I remember the time many years ago when I was still school-age, several of us were in a room visiting and someone asked Aunt Mary when she planned to retire. She looked very surprised at the question and said something like, "I don't have any plans to retire. I love my work, I love what I do. I don't have any desire to stop working." That really had an impact on me, hearing what it looks like to live and work your passion. She remained an inspiration to me over the years. Who would have thought that a few decades later I would be working in a long-term rehab facility for spinal cord injury and traumatic brain injury in Research? I, too, now am passionate about what I do and am so grateful to be a part of this work. Your mother was such a great role model for me, and I know, countless others.

March 21 at 12:18 PM



## Tribute Wall

**MARY BARTLETT BUNGE**

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PM

**Paula Monje** posted:

Here goes my tribute is to Mary as woman in science whose love and dedication astonished and inspired many. The more I think about Mary, the more I realize the many facets of her influence on me as a woman and a scientist. In my view, Mary was humble in the way she performed her role but she was also strong, committed and resilient with an impeccable sense for beauty. I joined the Bunge/Wood lab with a bare minimum understanding of neuroscience and even less knowledge of the pioneering contributions of their lab to the fields of neuron-glia biology and neural regeneration. For me, the Schwann cells were just another cell type I could remember from histology textbooks. With Mary and Pat Wood, I realized of the importance of myelin and Schwann cells while learning how to 'play' with these plastic cells so they reveal their secrets – at least a few of the ones I could understand. Because passion for science is contagious, I also became passionate about this fascinating type of cell. It took me many years of reading and processing to (re)discover the Bunge's papers and recognize their transforming contributions to the advancement of science. While experimenting in the lab, I realized of the quality, robustness, precision, and elegance of both execution and display that the work of the Bunge's entailed. I am thankful to Mary for the many discussions, her sharing of knowledge, her love and commitment for science, and her passing the torch... As she once told me when looking at electron micrographs of transplanted Schwann cells, she started her work a time in which no one knew how the different cell types that made up the nervous system looked like... I figure we have it easier now in a sense... Science is a never-ending collective, international endeavor that spans through space and time. I guess Mary understood that and transformed it into a life's mission. A celebration to Mary for her inspiring power, elegance and style, and the many scientific contributions that neuroscientists now take for granted...

March 9 at 7:21 AM

AL

**Allan** shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Mary (and Richard) were an incredible team - wonderfully smart but humble. Mary influenced so many of us. One could not ask for a better mentor. I will never get my experience in the Bunge Laboratory. Allan Levi



March 18 at 6:48 AM



## Tribute Wall

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MB

**Marybeth Bowers Bunge** posted:

Mary became my "extra aunt" by marriage in 1981. We had many things in common: only children, same initials, lovers of cats, art (and artists), and a fascination with the family in we found ourselves (Bunges!). Over the years we shared many family celebrations, impromptu and planned. But one of my favorite memories is of Mary in Manhattan, just we two. We wandered the Metropolitan museum and she made us a delicious salmon supper in her magnificent mid-town apartment. She found awe and wonder everywhere, and her depth of faith was limitless. I will miss her and am so grateful to have known her.

March 17 at 12:35 PM

CO

**Crystal Van Orsdel** posted:

I feel privileged to have known this extraordinary woman and to have enjoyed her company at daily breakfasts, at stimulating book club discussions, on evening walks around Coral Gables, and on weekend outings to art museums and cinemas. Her unfailing kindness and compassion, her wisdom, her intelligence, her philanthropy, and her wit were and continue to serve as a potent role models for me. To be in her presence and to talk with her was always a joy. Her memory is a blessing.--Mary C. Starke, PhD, (Retired) Professor of Clinical Psychology

March 13 at 12:09 PM

BB

**Beth Bunge** posted:

Some memories of Aunt Mary are also with Uncle Richard and Jon and Pete. Our family and theirs would get together for Thanksgiving. When we would go to St Louis we kids looked forward to the player piano they had in their basement. That was the coolest thing ever to a kid! And their hospitality was fabulous - Mary was a great hostess!

March 11 at 8:19 AM



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DW

**David Weems** posted:

How do you encapsulate a person like Mary Bunge in a couple of paragraphs? The answer is you probably don't or can't. But this is what I'd like to say. Back in the day, I went to Miami with my then girlfriend, and we stayed at a motel, just above South Beach. And I told her we have to go see Mary Bunge. And my girlfriend said, yes of course. And we had a wonderful visit. And I saw Mary once again at the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation charity event with my fiancé a few years later. Mary was a good texter, like my mother. And if you're good at that, and aren't afraid of technology, then you can easily keep in touch with people who live 1,300 miles away. Because they took technology easily in stride, Mary and my mother stayed close to the people in their lives. Mary and I use to confer about what was on PBS. She observed most recently that PBS had become less than it once had been. That it had become too involved in series, as opposed to great singular works. I wholly concurred. And as a member of two book clubs, Mary was very active and enthusiastic about literature. And we spoke at length about whatever it was I was reading at the time, in which she was always keenly interested. I would go to the bookstore, find a wonderful book, and the first person I'd tell about my new-found treasure was Mary. The last time I recall seeing Mary in Miami was in the late 90's, in town this time with my fiancé. And on the way to see her, I got lost, as is my wont to do, even now with GPS... doesn't matter; can't find my way out of a paper bag...but we finally arrived, had a glass or two of cheer, as Mary called it, and as we were leaving, knowing I was still simmering from having been disastrously lost, she said, "Now you listen to me. Calm down mister." I'll never forget that, for some reason. And I did my best to calm down. And my girlfriend drove us home, and I didn't say a word the entire way, like a petulant child. And we arrived safely back home from Coral Gables to our motel, just above South Beach. - David Weems

March 9 at 7:21 AM

SF

**Susan Fitzpatrick** posted:

Tom and I will never forget walking along the quay in Paris with Mary and Dick after a lovely dinner when we were there together for an International Spinal Cord Meeting. The evening was magical. It is impossible to overstate the influence Mary has had in so many spheres. Friend, role model, mentor, inspiration. Everything she did she did so well. Susan

March 9 at 7:21 AM



Lanya Shihabuddin shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

May 26 at 3:22 PM



**Last summer in the Vineyard!**



# Media

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March 26 at 6:52 PM





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March 18 at 6:48 AM



Bunge Lab - 1991



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring MARY by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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