

Ruth Denison Retrospective
Friday, February 20, 7-9pm
Mindfulness Care Center, 42 Gough St, San Francisco
<http://www.mindfulnesscare.org/>

Ruth Denison is a senior western dharma teacher. A part of the first wave of westerners who traveled to Asia to practice Buddhist meditation in early 60s, Ruth was the only woman authorized to teach by the Burmese master U Ba Khin. She began to teach in 1973, and spent 40 years sharing the dharma internationally. Currently 92 years old, Ruth lives a simple life in the Mojave Desert and is retired from public teaching. This evening will offer an introduction to her teaching through video clips, reflections on her life, and stories from her students. Ruth is famous for being the first western dharma teacher to incorporate conscious body movement as a means of cultivating mindful awareness – something that is now commonplace. She was also the first to offer retreats exclusively for women, another trend that has taken hold.

Ruth Denison was born in East Prussia in 1922. She came of age during World War II and managed to emigrate to west berlin where she lived out the war with her aunt and sister. After the war Ruth voluntarily snuck back into East Germany to look for lost relatives. During this time she experienced many horrors, including multiple gang rapes, abuse, abduction, imprisonment in soviet work camps, hunger and fear. Despite tremendous suffering, Ruth managed to survive, thrive, and keep her heart open. As a meditation teacher Ruth is renowned for her work with trauma and severe mental illness, long before the science of these conditions was developed. Her compassionate and wise presence has helped many. Her work continues to be relevant today. This evening is offered freely to all. Donations are gratefully accepted, and will benefit a film currently being produced about Ruth's life & teaching.