



## Jeanette Louise Cross

March 21, 1926 - July 25, 2022

It is with heavy but loving hearts that we announce the passing of our mother, Jeanette Louise Cross, 96, on Monday, July 25, 2022. Jeanette was an 8-year resident at Westminster Canterbury Richmond, most recently at Parsons Health Care where the entire staff lovingly administered to her health and her spirit. We are especially grateful to orderly Rodney, nurses Amber and Crystal, activity coordinator Kendra as well as Dr. Reed, among many.

Jeanette had three children: Timothy (Betty) of West Point, VA, Christopher (Bronwyn) of Richmond, VA and John (Beverly) of Wilmington, NC. In addition, she had five grandchildren: David, Mark, Eric, Grant and Alecsys and two great-grandchildren: Owen and Lucas.

Jeanette was born on March 21, 1926, in Portsmouth, Virginia to Edward Taylor and Jeanette Bensten Cross. She had three older brothers: Edward, James and Albert. Together all four Cross children, part of the greatest American generation, volunteered for military duties and served the country during World War II.

Jeanette graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in Portsmouth and was an active member and choral standout at Monumental Methodist Church. Jeanette and her great mezzo-soprano voice went on to study and graduate from The Peabody Institute of Music in Baltimore, MD (now a part of Johns

Hopkins University). While there Jeanette met Denis Brown, a violin student from Jamaica, West Indies. Following their graduation Jeanette and Denis moved to London, England where Denis continued his violin studies at the Royal College of Music.

Rather than pursue an awaiting vocal career in New York, Jeanette married Denis in London and started a family there. While there she stayed active in the music community and performed with various choral groups as well as solo orchestral and operatic performances with the London Philharmonia and Philharmonic throughout post-war Europe.

Jeanette and Denis later moved to Jamaica where she taught voice at the Jamaica School of Music as well as frequently performing in operatic and German Lieder performances. She was often cited by the famous German composer Hermann Reutter as one of the most powerful and outstanding voices to sing lieder. In fact, at a concert at the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg, VA she shattered the crystals on the ballroom chandelier with her high C—a feat that was documented in the *Virginian Pilot* at the time (1960's).

Following political upheaval in Jamaica in the 1970's the family moved to Richmond. There Jeanette continued her vocal endeavors. On the teaching staff at Virginia Commonwealth University, performances with the Richmond Symphony, solo and ensemble concerts throughout the area. She also ran a private voice studio in various venues around the city as well as in Washington, DC. Jeanette stayed true to her calling and was admired by many as a demanding, but compassionate voice instructor.

Despite her busy music career, Jeanette was a devoted and loving mother, a marvelous cook and had a wry sense of humor. She will be greatly missed by her family as well as the many musicians, students and community members

she interacted with and enjoyed life with, over her many years.

Mom, we have had the opportunity to enjoy you and your many talents for a long time. Your light will shine in us for the rest of our lives.

# Tribute Wall



“ *i remember this lovely lady with the accent singing like an angel. because of Jeanette i wanted to be a singer ever since i was 10 ! i did make it as a singer!! thank you Jeanette!! You all lived on jamestown Cresc. at the time.*

*John Hurst*

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**John Hurst** - November 29, 2022 at 03:23 PM

TB

“ *I cherish the years I served as Jeanette's accompanist for her vocal studio In Richmond. Between lessons, a pot of Constant Comment Tea was at the ready, where we shared our stories whether professional or personal.*

*She taught me so much of the vocal repertoire and technique while I accompanied her many students. I was blessed to perform with her a few times on the organ while she sang Brünhilde. Jeanette always encouraged my crazy musical organization ideas and helped me make them happen. There could have been no Opera Alliance, Inc. without her. When Jeanette Cross performed with you, you had to up your game or you would be left behind.*

*Jeanette was a grand lady, and the world says goodbye to a great treasure.*

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**Tom Bailey** - July 27, 2022 at 08:15 AM

HH

“ News from July, 19, 1963! *The Stories I Have Heard* always made me wish I could have know Tim’s Mom and Dad ... 2 World Class highly claimed Musicians!



Howard Hilton - July 26, 2022 at 02:03 PM



“ I’m so sorry to hear of Jeanette’s passing. I was always in awe of her whenever she visited. I’m so sorry we lost touch over the years. I thought her life was fascinating and adored her voice. Much love to my cousins and I know you will miss her greatly. She was a great lady. I’d love to see more pictures. Love, Debbie (Cross) and Gary Gup



Debbie Gup - July 26, 2022 at 10:20 AM

JP

“ Betty and Tim  
So sorry to hear about your Mother. We send our love and sympathy to you and your family. May you feel God’s love and comfort during this difficult time.

Judy and Glenn Palmer - July 25, 2022 at 08:50 PM



I’m so sorry to hear of Jeanette’s passing. I was always in awe of her whenever she visited. I’m so sorry we lost touch over the years. I thought her life was fascinating and adored her voice. Much love to my cousins and I know you will miss her greatly. She was a great lady. I’d love to see more pictures. Love, Debbie (Cross) and Gary Gup

Debbie Gup - July 26, 2022 at 10:10 AM

RE

*Jeanette was absolutely one of my favorite people. She was an inspiration and I always looked forward to my voice lesson and the time with Jeanette. My mind has been on her and I wondered if she had joined heaven's choir. RIP dear friend.*

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**Renita** - October 22, 2022 at 11:09 PM