



Ruth Irvine Fraser

June 17, 1918 - March 6, 2018

Ruth Irvine Gordon Fraser of Columbia, SC, passed away peacefully on March 6, 2018, at the age of 99.

Ruth Irvin Gordon Fraser was born on June 17, 1918 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada to Grace MacKenzie Gordon and John Gordon. The youngest of three girls, she started music lessons as a child. She studied piano and cello, and excelled at the cello, playing with school orchestras and orchestras in Winnipeg. Ruth earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Manitoba. During this period she met Arthur Fraser, who played the piano and French horn, and who became her husband of thirty years.

Ruth and Arthur were married in September 1942, just before Arthur went overseas to fight with the Canadian Army in World War II. During the three and a half long years they were apart, Ruth[MFB1] worked in a medical arts building in Toronto, Ontario.

After the war Ruth and Arthur moved to New Jersey for Arthur to pursue a master's degree in Music Education at Columbia University. Here, their first son, Loran Gordon, was born. They returned to Winnipeg for one year where Arthur taught[MFB2] public school and where their second son, Bruce MacKenzie, was born. They then moved to New York where Arthur earned a Doctorate in Music and Music Education, again at Columbia University. The Frasers spent three years in Spokane, Washington, where Arthur taught at Whitworth College and their daughter, Susan Marie, was born.

Arthur's career took the Fraser family to Howard College (now Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama for a year, and then to Alabama College in Montevallo, Alabama, for eight years. He remained in Montevallo as Head of the Music Department until 1963 when the Frasers moved to Columbia, South Carolina for Arthur to become the Head of the Music Department at the University of South Carolina. Arthur led the USC Music Department until shortly before his death in 1972.

Throughout her life Ruth played cello in trios, small orchestras, large orchestras, including

the Birmingham Symphony (now the Alabama Symphony Orchestra), the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra (which her husband helped form), and Greenville Orchestra. She performed in the debut performance of the Columbia Festival Orchestra (now the South Carolina Philharmonic) in 1964 under the direction of her husband. She played with both Igor Stravinsky and Isaac Hayes. She taught cello and remained active in the South Carolina music scene until her retirement.

Ruth was a busy mother to three children, perpetual room mom, and enthusiastic school and local volunteer. She traveled to Europe twice, to Japan, Scandinavia, and parts of the Middle East. She was an assiduous gardener, a superb baker, a very good Bridge player, and a lover of music, art, books, and radio. She was active in the Symphony League, the Handbell Choir at Eastminster Presbyterian Church, and P.E.O. (a 50 year member). She enjoyed watching golf and baseball and had a fierce interest in current events.

She is survived by her three children Loran (Joan Hampton), Bruce (Michelle), Susan (Tom Law), nine grandchildren, and two greatgrandchildren.

A private burial will take place Saturday, March 10, in Columbia. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Arthur M. Fraser Music Scholarship at the USC School of Music.

Comments



“ How sad to hear about Aunt Ruth. I have so many fond memories of her. My condolences to all the family. Just think she almost made it to 100-quite an accomplishment.

Marilyn

Marilyn Peach - March 10, 2018 at 01:44 PM