



Elizabeth Morton

September 5, 1928 - December 8, 2024

If you walked into the room where Bettye was, you were going to be greeted with a warm hello, a comforting smile, and possibly a “Hi, Sweetheart” or “Hi, Sweetie Pie.” Elegant, gentle, kindhearted, thoughtful, funny, well-read, smart, strong, faithful, sweet, spunky, community-focused, lover of one’s fellow man, and warm are just some of the words that describe Bettye Morton. However, even those words fall short in describing all of who she was. She was an incredible person whose life touched so many over her 96 years and whose conduct was an example that others could follow.

The Early Years

Elizabeth Anne Burroughs Morton, affectionately known as “Bettye,” was born to Alwen Burroughs of Pennsylvania and Lillian Garner Harris of Baltimore, Maryland on September 5, 1928. Growing up in West Baltimore’s McCullough Street Community, Bettye was surrounded by her family, including her much beloved aunts Margaret, Anne, Lula, and Bernice. Bettye was raised by her mother and stepfather along with her younger sister, Delores. Bettye and “Lorsey” were very close well into adulthood and raised their children also to be very close. Bettye attended Saint Frances Academy, then known as the Saint Frances School for Girls, the independent Catholic school specifically established in 1828 to “provide a Christian education to colored children” and “teach children of color to read the Bible.” After graduating from Saint

Frances, Bettye attended the Community College of Baltimore. When she was a student, Bettye was an avid reader with a strong curiosity about information and the world around her.

A Loving Wife, Mother and Friend

Bettye married William Lee Morton in September 1947 and from this union, three children were born: Adrienne Maria, Alexis Maria, and Edward Aaron. Bettye loved Bill and throughout their marriage supported his need to tend to the demands of the family moving and hauling business, Lawrence Morton Express. Bettye was a devoted mother to her children. For many years, the center of their lives as a family was the home Bettye and Bill shared on Liberty Heights Avenue. Hosting many a club meeting, ladies' luncheons, and pool parties, Bettye enjoyed opening her home to others, hosting, and entertaining. As her children grew into adulthood, chose their careers, were married, had children of their own, became homeowners, and even reached retirement, Bettye was there every step of the way. She always showed her support, always showed her children that she loved them, and always made their friends feel welcome in her home. In 1991, Bettye and Bill left Liberty Heights and moved to The Elmont condominium community. In her building, Bettye was well-liked and known among her neighbors for her kindness.

A Consummate Professional

Bettye was well-known for exquisite penmanship, being a stickler for correct grammar and spelling, and loving a good book. Anyone who visited her home over the years would find her reading a novel or finishing up a crossword puzzle in a book or from the newspaper. Bettye kept a large collection of books and passed her favorites on to others. In recent years, and always wanting to share the gift of reading, Bettye purchased copies of First Lady Michelle Obama's book and gifted them to her family members.

Bettye's professional life aligned with her love of reading. For more than four decades, she was employed as a Technical Reader and Supervisor at The Maryland Delaware D.C. Press Association. There, with pleasure, engagement, and intensity, Bettye sat at a news editor's desk. Under her lamp, she daily read hundreds of articles from national, regional, and local newspapers, at what seemed like lightning speed, for business, government, and organizational clients in search of mentions and references. In order to do her job well, Bettye not only had to be familiar with numerous national, regional and local periodicals and their respective sections, but she also had to understand the nature and nuances of each client's business, as well as the family tree of their business enterprises. No one was as agile, organized or informed as Bettye when it came to performing that job. Bettye trained others who came to work there (including children and a grandchild) and no one got a pass when they showed up. Bettye was serious about her work. She conducted herself at her place of employment with integrity and with the highest degree of professionalism until she retired in the 1990s.

A Woman of Elegance

Whether she was going to work or to a formal dance, Bettye loved and kept up with fashion. Her hair was always pulled together neatly and nicely, and reflected the styles of the time. She had quite the selection of attire – both casual, workwear and formal – such that the third floor of her Liberty Heights home was dedicated to storage of her clothes and set up like a department store with several commercial racks. One of her favorite stores was Neiman Marcus. However, Bettye was not selfish when it came to her fashionable belongings. She would often share or try to give away something she had to someone else. She wanted others to be able to share in what she had been blessed with.

A Commitment to Philanthropy and Community Organizations

Bettye was a Matron in one of the original Order of the Eastern Star Chapters and was instrumental in growing the Myra Grand Lodge of Maryland. As an active member of the Eastern Star and the wife of a long-time Grand Lodge Officer, she helped advance the outreach, charitable work, and community engagement for which Prince Hall Masons were known. From Camp Prince Hall Myra to restoring the Druid Hill Avenue YMCA, Bettye and Bill worked alongside each other and set the example for commitment as a couple to charitable works.

Apart from Bill, Bettye had her own philanthropic and community interests. For years, Bettye volunteered with the Food Bank of Maryland and the St. Vincent DePaul Society Outreach programs. Over the course of five decades, she was a longtime active member of and held leadership position in the Baltimore chapter of The CHUMS, a national civic group of professional women involved in civic concerns; the Baltimore/Maryland chapter of The Epicureans (“Eppies”), a national women’s organization whose focus is on social, cultural, literary, and charitable affairs; The 20 Women Club, and The Daz Club. Over the years, Bettye remained engaged politically and volunteered to assist in local campaigns.

A Lover of Travel, Entertainment, and Galas

Bettye loved to travel. She and Bill were known for their European trips with the Masons or with close friends, their tropical cruises, and visits to Atlantic City after they retired. When Bettye was not hosting a catered card party for friends at her home, she would try her luck in casinos. Because of their involvement in community and civic organizations, Bill and Bettye were often invited or inviting others to attend socialite events, fundraising galas, or formal

dances. There, Bettye could be seen in a sparkly gown, as she and Bill danced and appeared to glide across the floor.

A Woman of Faith

Bettye was raised in the Catholic faith and was a devote Catholic for the entire of her life. As a child, she attended The St. Peter Claver Parish and later St. Cecilia's Church. Eventually, she attended and was very active as a Sunday School teacher and volunteer at Our Lady of Lords Church, which later merged with The New All Saints Church. When not at her own church, she would attend The First Baptist Church of Baltimore and The Central Baptist Church of Baltimore. Her favorite hymn of the church was Ave Maria. In addition to keeping a missile and rosary close by, Bettye regularly read The Bible and attended bible study. She prayed fervently and continually thanked God for his blessings, for keeping her, and for His faithfulness.

A Loving Grandmother and More

Family was very important to Bettye. Bettye loved chocolate and never failed to share with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She first became a grandmother when Tonya was born. Tonya's name for Bettye was "Grandmother." Next came Keir, then D'Edward and then Juaacklyn, all who called Bettye, "Nana." Whether she was "Grandmother" or "Nana," Bettye loved them all the same. It was more than just the fact that she never forgot a birthday, special date, or milestone occasion but she showed her love with support, encouragement, and teaching. As an instruction in etiquette, Bettye hosted formal luncheons for Tonya and Keir and their friends when they were very young girls. Much like a tea party, the guests received formal invitations, were required to dress up, and were greeted with unique place cards at the dining room table.

Although D'Edward was raised in Washington, D.C. and Virginia, and she did not get to see him as often as she wished, Bettye still was deliberate about making sure he knew that she loved him and that he did not feel left out because of the distance. Eventhough she did not drive, she attended his games and events as often as she could. She had weekly conversations with his other grandmother to make sure she stayed engaged and up to speed on the latest in his life between his visits with her. Juaacklyn was the youngest of the grandchildren and Bettye had her own, special relationship with her. When Juaacklyn became a mother and as she raised her sons, Bettye never stopped showing support for and encouraging her. Summers that D'Edward and Juaacklyn spent with Nana were like no other. While her asthma kept her inside on the hot days, Bettye kept a watchful eye over them in the swimming pool from indoors.

Bettye took her grandchildren to church with her and they regularly saw her praying the rosary and finding a way to help other people. She taught her grandchildren to be kind to others, to be respectful, and to be thankful. Ensuring that they were equipped with thank you cards was a must and if the cards were not mailed in the time she thought, Bettye would handwrite and mail them out herself. The same lessons that she taught the grand-children she passed down to the great-grandchildren – those who lived near and far.

A Woman of Strength

Sometimes quiet-spoken, Bettye's strength was in her kindness and in her understanding that one did not always have to have the last word. She faced life with such a positive attitude and extended grace to others. She held on to her faith during the times when she experienced great loss when loved ones-- including her sister, her husband, Bill, in 2019, her son, Aaron, in 2002, and most recently, her daughter, Adrienne, this year—passed away.

Over the years, Bettye found a closeknit group of good girlfriends with whom she traveled, socialized, and spoke frequently. A few of them have passed on but their bonds lasted for decades.

In her final years, Bettye lived between her own home at the homes of her daughters and granddaughter, Tonya, who pulled together to take care of her. During her time living with Alexis, Bettye enjoyed sitting on the front porch and chatting with neighbors and children in the neighborhood.

The memory of Bettye will be cherished by her daughter, Alexis Morton; her grandchildren, Tonya Maria Austin and her husband, Tony Austin, Keir Dullea Morton-Manley and her husband, Eric Manley, D'Edward Aaron Morton and his wife, Roberta Morton, and Juaacklyn Lakeisha Woodson; her brothers-in-law, Lawrence E. Morton, Jr., Larry Morton, and Lee Morton; great-grandchildren Niles Ford, Ayanna Austin, Delondre Morton, Sanaa Manley, Kine' Manley, Roland Morton, Benjamin Coleman and Joshua Coleman; a great-great granddaughter, Bella Webb; and long-time friend, Christine Moore, as well as close family friends, nieces and nephews, and other relatives.

(End of obituary.)

Cemetery Details

Woodlawn Cemetery

2130 Woodlawn Drive
Baltimore, MD 21207

Previous Events

Public Viewing

DEC 18. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown
5616 Old Court Rd
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Wake

DEC 19. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown
5616 Old Court Rd
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Funeral Service

DEC **19**. 10:30 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center - Randallstown
5616 Old Court Rd
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Tribute Wall



“ *Marshall-March Funeral Homes created a Webcast in memory of Elizabeth Morton*



March Life Tribute Centers - December 11, 2024 at 07:10 PM

MP

Keir sending condolences to you and the family. Ms Pat

Ms Pat - December 14, 2024 at 03:35 PM

MA

Sending up prayers and my condolences to you and the family during this time. Marcy

Marcy Alexander - December 16, 2024 at 09:48 AM

MU

My condolences to the Morton Family. From Cousin Muriel Griffin

Muriel - December 17, 2024 at 06:21 PM

JF

“ Our hearts are praying that this dear Morton -Manley families are strengthened and comforted. Keir "Tata" we love you and we know your family will miss her. You and your family are so loving to so many, especially to us. So sorry we cant physically be with you, but we are with you in Spirit. We send love to you all.

*Johnson and Rhodes Families
Miami, Florida*

Johnson Rhodes Families - December 14, 2024 at 09:48 PM

M(

“ We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love, and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

March Life Tribute Center (Randallstown) - December 11, 2024 at 02:47 PM