



## Beatrice Mosby Harwood

November 18, 1928 - June 22, 2026

Beatrice Mosby Harwood, a strong and steadfast woman throughout her 97 years, passed away peacefully on June 19 at her home in Chestertown, MD.

Bea, or Bebe as family called her, was in the vanguard of post-World War II American women who balanced professional careers with home life. With unflinching grace, she raised four children, maintained a devoted marriage of 50 years, and served the public as a statistician for the federal government.

She was born on the Mosby family farm in Somerville, TN, near Memphis, in a house without plumbing, electricity or central heat. Her mother discovered she was having twins when the family doctor discerned two heartbeats shortly before delivery.

Notwithstanding Great Depression austerity - the family's 1932 Christmas budget was \$5 - Bea Mosby enjoyed a delightful childhood with her sister Betty and older brother Davenport. At age 11 her family moved to Nashville when her father, a lawyer who served in the state senate, took a government job. She savored summers with her sister at Camp Monterey, where swimming became a lifelong passion.

At Vanderbilt University, she made Phi Beta Kappa as a mathematics major and, along with Betty, joined the Delta Delta Delta sorority. There she met a

serious-minded Iwo Jima Marine attending college on the GI bill. She shrugged off the misgivings of her parents and married Richard Harwood, a decision she never regretted.

They started married life in Nashville, where he began a distinguished journalistic career at the Tennessean, and she taught school. A few years later they moved to Louisville, KY when he joined the newspaper there. She gave birth to their four children in Louisville.

In 1961, they migrated to the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC. He covered the exciting new presidency of John F. Kennedy; she initially stayed home to handle child-rearing. But she never assumed the role of quiescent housewife. As the decade went on, she joined demonstrations against the Vietnam War well before the protest movement mushroomed.

Crafting a schedule that allowed her to begin work after children left for school and return home when they did, she pursued her career aspirations analyzing epidemiological data for the Public Health Service. She always cherished her professional independence even as her husband rose in prominence as a reporter and editor at The Washington Post.

In 1974, the family relocated again when the Post bought the Trenton N.J. Times and sent him there as its editor. While supporting his career, she adapted hers by taking a job at the Educational Testing Service. When he returned to the Post in 1977, she joined the staff of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, poring over fire accident reports to reduce risks to Americans associated with clothing, furniture, fireworks, and lighters.

She retired in 1993. Just over seven years later, weeks after they celebrated a half-century of marriage, he passed away at 75.

Bea Harwood remained vibrant and active for the rest of her life. Her four children and eight grandchildren loved spending time with her and considered her a role model.

She participated in book and movie clubs in Bethesda, where she moved to an apartment, and in Chestertown, where the family in 1985 had purchased a getaway place on Langford Creek. She traveled, often with her daughter Helen, sustained an avid interest in public affairs, and swam the backstroke into her 90s.

Large Mosby family reunions in Tennessee provided treasured memories. After Davenport passed away in 2007, she remained close with Betty, her twin in birth if not temperament.

Betty, who resides in Nashville, was always more loquacious and social. But Bea never lost her Southern charm, even though a lifetime up North erased almost all of her accent. Reunited in Bethesda after the isolation of covid in 2021, the 92-year-old Mosby girls hoisted glasses of Scotch for a photo that later appeared in People magazine.

As her health declined in recent months, she received extraordinary care from her son David and daughter-in-law Ellen Marshall after they moved in with her at Chestertown. They were beside her as she completed one more of her beloved newspaper crossword puzzles on the morning of her passing.

In addition to her sister, her daughter, her two other sons John and Richard, and her grandchildren, Bea Harwood is survived by nine great-grandchildren. They will hold a memorial service to celebrate Bea's life this summer.

Information about the service will be posted at [FHNfuneralhome.com](http://FHNfuneralhome.com). In lieu

of flowers, the family requests that any donations be sent to the Dollie S. Williams Memorial Scholarship Fund at Camp Monterey, 2636 Muddy Pond Road, Monterey TN 38574, and to the 4M Swim Club, [4mswim.org](http://4mswim.org), which teaches children in the greater Baltimore area to swim.