



Joan Ellen Blume

August 6, 1931 - February 18, 2025

Joan Ellen Blume died Tuesday February 18, 2025, at The Resorts at Chester River, Chestertown MD. She was 93. Born August 6, 1931, in Cape May County, NJ, she was the daughter of Michael E. and Sara Ellen (Shropshire) Blume. Joan grew up in Cape May; a place she always called “Home”, no matter where she resided.

Joan earned a bachelor’s in musical education from New Jersey Women’s College (Rutgers) in 1953 and a Masters’ degree in conducting from Trenton State. She taught music appreciation, musical theatre, and chorus for 25 years at Highland Park High School in New Jersey. She led school music groups to Czechoslovakia in 1971 and Poland in 1978 as part of Ambassadors of Friendship program. She went to England as a Fullbright Exchange Teacher and studied conducting in Frankfurt, Germany. She sang with the New York Chorale Society at many famous venues including Carnegie Hall and Kennedy Arts Center. After retiring in 1979 from Highland Park, Joan continued her multi-faceted professional music career. She gave private lessons to vocal students, conducted with several organizations and church groups, was musical director for plays, performed as a piano accompanist, was an Associate Faculty member at Chesapeake College in the late 1990’s, played piano for several churches, and sang with the Chester River Chorale until 2020.

Joan loved to travel in the USA and abroad. She visited many countries, including Cold War Soviet Union and China. She volunteered at a

southwestern reservation. Besides music and travel, Joan enjoyed boat rides, art - especially her students', cross-country skiing and petting everybody's dogs.

She was predeceased by her brother, Jack Channing Blume and dear friend, Mary Lou Bleakley. She is survived by many cousins including Norma and William Shropshire, Alyssa Shropshire, Bill Shropshire, Elizabeth Woods, and Kimberley Shropshire, as well as friends Bill Bleakley and his family, Lynn Geisert, and host of others her life has touched.

Services will be private. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the New Jersey chapter, Nature Conservancy at www.nature.org.

Tribute Wall



“*Joan Blume was a major influence in my life. I was the accompanist for several of the high school choirs, and I will never forget her kindness and support. She knew how to bring out the best in everyone. I was also in all of the show bands from 1961 - 1965. The triumverate of Miss Blume, Mr. A, and Mr. Stevens was an unbeatable combination. Their synergy was behind so many outstanding musicals. Thank you, Joan Blume, for being the inspiration behind my becoming a music teacher, myself. My sincere condolences to all who loved her, as I did.*

Myrna Gifford - April 22, 2025 at 10:25 PM

MW

“*Joan was my chorus director at Highland Park High School. She was wonderful, forming our young voices into a stellar ensemble. She always went out of her way to help us, including driving us to All State choir functions. She was a wonderful mentor and I am so glad she was in my life. My deepest sympathy to her family and friends. Mary Winters*

Mary Winters - April 13, 2025 at 10:13 AM

EM

“*Joan Blume was one of the greatest influences on my becoming a professional musician. Singing in the HPHS choirs taught me an incredible amount about musicianship. One thing that stands out in my mind is that she was not afraid to use very high level choral pieces, which the choir was always successful in performing! I thank her for all that she contributed towards the musical development of her students!*

Ellen Macales - April 08, 2025 at 05:52 AM

EM

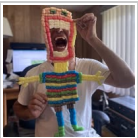
“*Joan Blume was one of the teachers who made HPHS so special. She was gentle and kind, especially to those who were not gifted vocalists but who just enjoyed singing for the fun of it. When I was a freshman ('67-'68) in her class, she had us sing an arrangement of Scarborough Fair with its rich harmonies. We were not very good at first, but by the time we were to perform for the rest of the school, we pulled it out thanks to Miss Blume never giving up on us. Along with Mr. A. and Mr. Stevens, Miss Blume was behind some of the great musicals we put on in those years. Thank you, Ms. Blume, for all that you gave to us.*

Ed Milch - February 28, 2025 at 09:18 AM

CS

“*Joan Blume was a gentle, kind and caring woman. I was not a great vocalist but she was always encouraged me. She made an impact on so many HPHS students and their families with her all inclusive acceptance. Ahe will be missed by many.*

Cindy Stevens-Pino - February 27, 2025 at 03:04 PM



“*My sincere condolences to all who loved her. I became a professional singer largely due to Joan's support. She gave me big solos in choir which really egged me on. I also remember taking "Fundamentals" in band school as a kid. RIP Joan!*

Ed Cohn - February 27, 2025 at 07:12 AM

GR

“ I owe my 38 year career as a High School choral director to Miss Blume. She believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. She offered to come with me and accompany me at my college auditions at Trenton State College. She impacted so many during her life and I for one will be ever grateful.



Gayle Rubinstein - February 26, 2025 at 09:56 PM

RW

“ Joan conducting the HPHS choir in Czechoslovakia, August 1971. She shared her love of music with generations of students and with audiences around the world.



Richard Woodward - February 26, 2025 at 09:56 PM

MK

Ms. Blume (I had a hard time calling her Joan, as she insisted later in life) was one of a small group of teachers I had through high school, who pushed kids in all the right ways and kept us singing and interested and wanting to learn more about music, chord progressions, and all that. She knew what I was capable of way before I did, and had me singing the lead in a Spanish mass, "Misa Criolla", at Kirkpatrick Chapel in New Brunswick. I went to Czechoslovakia with her and the choir (I'm in that pic somewhere!), and the next summer to Romania. Trips that were among the most special in my life. I imagine she's up in heaven now, teaching the angels how they should really sing! RIP, Music ma'am. May your memory be a blessing. Sending my love for you out to the stars.

Michael Karol - April 23, 2025 at 05:30 PM

CF

“ Carol Freedman lit a candle in memory of Joan Ellen Blume



Carol Freedman - February 26, 2025 at 07:55 PM

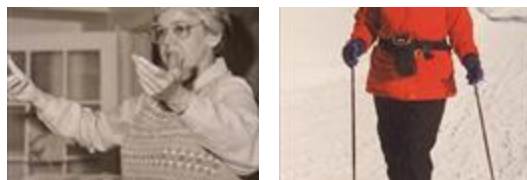
KH

Ms. Blume recruited me as a tenor... As my voice matured into a baritone, my inner voice will always be a tenor thanks to Joan RIP

Kenneth Holdowsky - February 26, 2025 at 09:10 PM

KS

“ 2 files added to the album Joan Blume



Kimberley Shropshire - February 25, 2025 at 08:57 AM

KD

“ I am one of MaryLou and Bill Bleakley’s children and we knew Joan as Aunt Blume. She was with our family often for holidays and other celebrations through the years. My daughter is very musical and Joan loved to hear her play. She even gifted her one of her conducting batons which my daughter treasures. Joan and my mom grew up together and were like sisters. May all who knew her find comfort that she now rests in peace and May we find great joy as we celebrate her life.

Kate Bleakley DiRienzo - February 19, 2025 at 09:02 PM

MW

“ *Marian Walbert Wyble lit a candle in memory of Joan Ellen Blume*



Marian Walbert Wyble - February 19, 2025 at 09:43 AM

SG

Music, art, and theater were safe places for me in High School. I was a part of the Chorus and the Madrigal Singers. I thought that the way she guided us was magical. I was asthmatic but still experienced success. She was amazing. I'm glad she had such a rich life.

Sarah Geiger - April 13, 2025 at 02:53 PM

AH

“ *Anita Hayes lit a candle in memory of Joan Ellen Blume*



Anita Hayes - February 19, 2025 at 09:33 AM