



## Joan Culver Merriken

November 19, 1929 - January 25, 2016

Joan Culver Merriken, age 86, passed away quietly on Monday, January 25, 2016, at Calvert Manor Healthcare Center in Rising Sun, MD.

She was the daughter of the late Dallas and Virginia Culver of Seaford, DE. Her daughter, Susan Merriken Haggerty (George) of Elkton, MD, and her granddaughter, Allison Elizabeth Davis of Baltimore, MD, survive. Her grandson, Brendan Christopher Davis, predeceased her.

Joan was born November 19, 1929, in Philadelphia, PA. She graduated from Goucher College in 1951 and received her Masters of Arts from Washington College in 1977. Joan began her teaching career in Lincoln, DE, and, after moving to Chestertown, continued to teach at Chestertown Elementary School.

In 1967, Joan joined a group of community members seeking to create an independent school dedicated to educational excellence. This effort resulted in the establishment of Kent School and when the school opened in 1968, she was named Headmistress. In 1995, after twenty-eight years as the founding Headmistress of Kent School, Joan retired. Under her guidance, the school grew from a Kindergarten to seventh grade school of 79 students to a pre-K to eighth grade school of 198 students. After her retirement, Joan continued her involvement with Kent School as a member, emeritus of the Board of

Trustees. She also served on the Advisory Committee of Kent School's acclaimed Kudner Leyon Visiting Writers Program. In 2010, Joan was honored by Kent School and presented the Navigator Award "in special recognition of an individual who has given gifts of time, talent or treasure and made a difference in the educational life of a broad spectrum of Kent School students over a sustained period of time." In 2011, Kent School named Joan as an "Overseer," making her a member of a distinguished group recognized for their special commitment to Kent School. Joan wrote, "Perhaps the most rewarding part of my job is watching the intellectual, moral, and personal growth of every Kent School student. I am always proud of their academic success, but seeing what fine young people they become pleases me even more." In 2014, the Board of Trustees named the main building at Kent School the Joan C. Merriken Administrative Building in her honor.

In 1996, Joan became a founding member of the Board of Trustees for Radcliffe Creek School and served on that board for 15 years. She also served as president of the Radcliffe Creek School Board of Trustees. She was involved in bringing the New Canaan, CT, Horizons enrichment program to Kent School and to Kent County in 1995. She continued to be involved with the program, which moved to Radcliffe Creek School in 2009, throughout her life. She was a member of Emmanuel Episcopal Church where she served as Senior Warden.

In 2007, Joan was awarded the Inspiring Women Award as a woman "who conducts her life in a purposeful way, without flourish or fanfare, yet is seen as an example, an inspiration, by those whose lives she touches. One of the ordinary women in our community who do extraordinary things."

Joan was an avid reader, enjoyed traveling, and loved spending her summers at Rehoboth Beach.

A visitation will be held on Friday, January 29, from 5-7 p.m. at the Fellows, Helfenbein, and Newnam Funeral Home, 130 Speer Rd., Chestertown, MD. A Service in Celebration of, and Thanksgiving for, the Life of Joan will be held at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Cross St., Chestertown, MD, on Saturday, January 30 at 1 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Joan C Merriken Scholarship Fund, Kent School, 6788 Wilkins Lane, Chestertown, MD 21620 or the Margaret Metcalfe Brogan Scholarship Fund, Radcliffe Creek School, 201 Talbot Blvd., Chestertown, MD 21620.

# Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Visitation

JAN **29**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Chestertown Location  
130 Speer Road  
Chestertown, MD 21620  
(410) 778-0055  
info@fhnfuneralhome.com

### Memorial Service

JAN **30**. 1:00 PM (ET)

Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
101 N. Cross St.  
Chestertown, MD

# Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Joan Culver Merriken*



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**Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home** - January 28, 2016 at 08:05 AM



“ *Joan Culver Merriken*

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January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Joan Culver Merriken*

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January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *We always loved visiting with Joan in Rehobeth when we came to visit mutual friends. Our son in particular enjoyed playing golf with her. She was a terrific mentor for younger people. She will be greatly missed.*

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**Gretchen Levine** - February 06, 2016 at 10:05 PM

MD

“ Susan,

*It is with great sadness that we got the letter from Kent School about your mom. I was pleased to read that she died peacefully and presumably with dignity as well. I have always been grateful to her for taking a risk on me so many years ago when I first moved to St. Andrew's and she offered me the job at Kent School. It was there that I really launched my teaching career which will end in June of 2016. I am so sorry to have missed the service which I most certainly would have attended. I hope that it brought you and Alison closure.*

*While I was saddened to hear about your mother (I knew from Anne Vansant that she had been in a nursing home) I was shocked to read about Brendan. Your mother lived a long life so her death is sad but no tragedy. I do not know when Brendan died but even if it was recently he was so young. One of my most favorite pictures of Richard's younger years is one of Brendan and Richard sitting on our hallway steps. They had been playing in our bedroom and somehow gotten ahold of my two bathing suits and put them on. So there they sat in my bathing suits and Brendan is leaning over to give Richard a kiss!! If I knew where to send it, I would gladly have a copy made for you (assuming I can once again find it). Please let me know... our address is still at St. Andrew's where we plan to be for at least another year.*

*My best to you all from the DeSalvo's (Mary, David, Andrew and Richard)*

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**Mary DeSalvo** - February 02, 2016 at 07:07 PM

CP

“ Carmen Pratt lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken



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**Carmen Pratt** - January 31, 2016 at 08:12 AM

CM

“ Charles And Joanne McVeigh lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken



Charles and Joanne McVeigh - January 29, 2016 at 10:35 AM

CM

Should be Charles and Joanne, Deepest sympathies to George and Susan on the passing of such a close family member. We will help in any way needed. Just ask.

Charles and Joanne McVeigh - January 29, 2016 at 10:42 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joan Culver Merriken.



January 29, 2016 at 09:04 AM

JN

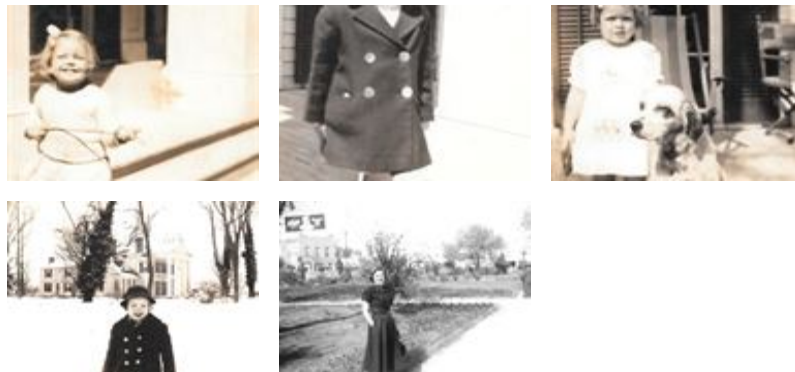
“ Joe Nickerson lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken



Joe Nickerson - January 28, 2016 at 01:38 PM



“ 30 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - January 28, 2016 at 07:56 AM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Joan Culver Merriken.



January 27, 2016 at 07:38 PM



“ *Tom And Nancy Lee Jewell* lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken



Tom and Nancy Lee Jewell - January 27, 2016 at 01:04 PM

CR

“*Joan Merriken was a superb educator and school administrator. I am forever grateful for the top education my son received at Kent School. I admired her greatly (and so did my family). She was a lovely lady. St. Andrew's School in Middletown stretched their allotment of 2 students from private school to allow more from Kent School - as they were so well behaved, educated and adjusted. I am proud of and grateful for what Joan did with Kent School.*



*Cathy Middleton Raphael*

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**Cathy Middleton Raphael** - January 27, 2016 at 12:56 PM

RF

“*Ruehrmund Family lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken*



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**Ruehrmund Family** - January 27, 2016 at 11:45 AM

TF

“*The Ruehrmund Family lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken*



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**The Ruehrmund Family** - January 27, 2016 at 11:44 AM

DH

“ *Denise Hepbron lit a candle in memory of Joan Culver Merriken*



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**Denise Hepbron** - January 27, 2016 at 07:54 AM