



Sharon Lee Wright

October 29, 1939 - November 15, 2025

Sharon Lee Wright came into this world on October 29, 1939. Born in Baltimore to her parents John Morgan Wright and Dorothy Elizabeth (Cooper) Wright, she grew up in the neighborhood of Highlandtown in a mixed generational home that her grandparents Benjamin Calvin Cooper and Wilabel (Dobson) Cooper shared with her parents.

At a very young age she displayed a remarkable talent for playing the piano, and began her formal studies at the Peabody Conservatory under the tutelage of Carlotta Heller. After many hundreds of hours of practice, she performed her first piano concerto with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra at the tender age of eleven, and became a frequent performer in the homes of her Park School classmates, providing musical entertainment for their parents and dinner guests. Her summers were spent in the home of her maternal great grandmother Anna Bell Dobson (nee Harrison) on Tilghman Island practicing and perfecting her technique on an old country church piano that was often out of tune, and so difficult to play that her hand and finger strength were greatly improved. By comparison the pianos on which she played at home and at the Peabody felt easy to play, which enabled her mastery of many Rachmaninoff pieces. Her favorite composer was Bach, and her large hands and finger strength allowed her mastery of many of his more challenging works for the piano.

In her later teens she travelled to South America, and after her time there, transited the ocean to perform in Europe. She also performed on the RMS Queen Elizabeth, earning her passage and sailing back across the Atlantic Ocean to the States. Of all the sights she saw in her travels, she spoke most reverently of sailing into the harbor in Rio de Janeiro and of the breathtaking view of the statue of Christ the Redeemer with his arms outstretched toward her and to all who entered there.

After her return to the States, she set aside her musical career in order to begin a family. Over the next sixteen years she became the mother of nine children. As a young mother, she discovered the joys of acting, finding herself in significant roles in *Of Mice and Men*, *Arsenic and Old Lace* and *Blythe Spirit*. She performed regularly for several seasons at Audrey Herman Spotlighters Theater in downtown Baltimore.

In the early 1970s she and her family moved from Baltimore to Charleston, West Virginia, where she reprised her role in *Blythe Spirit* and also had a significant role in *Marat/Sade* performing onstage with the Kanawha Players, one of the oldest continuously operating amateur theatre companies in the country. Her love of drama, costuming and performing was put on hold with a move further south to Peytona, where her growing family and the distance from the Kanawha Players made it not possible for her to continue to perform.

Though she had been a member of the Methodist Church as a child and the Lutheran church as a young mother of four, it was in Peytona that she accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Lord and Savior and was disciplined in her fledgling faith by her new best friend Ricie Somerville (deceased) and by her Lord Himself with the regular reading and study of her Bible. It was there that she began to instill in her children her personal faith, growing it in each of them as she herself grew to know and love Jesus more and more. She referred to that season of her life as “the happiest time in my life” and spoke

fondly to family and friends about the time she spent living there and learning about Jesus with Ricie. Her music took second place to her family, though she entertained her husband, children and family friends with her musical prowess on the grand piano she had moved into the family home there. A gifted and creative seamstress she used her costuming skills to design and sew costumes for her children that were the talk of the community.

With her piano in tow, she and her family moved to Morgantown, West Virginia in the late summer of 1977. She resurrected her musical career accompanying the choir at The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, where her children heard the gospel preached on Sunday mornings, evenings and at Wednesday night prayer meetings. She involved her children in musical theater productions and performed as an accompanist with them in the musical theater productions of *The Sound of Music* and *Oliver*.

As an adult with nine children and several grandchildren, she completed her Bachelor's Degree requirements, was graduated and awarded her degree from West Virginia University, where she also played as an accompanist in the College of Music and Arts at the Creative Arts Center.

She returned to Maryland in 1987 with her youngest five children and her piano and continued to expand her musical reach. She performed in many churches across the Baltimore Washington corridor, worked as an accompanist at the Peabody Conservatory and Goucher College, and also accompanied the Dulaney High School Thursday's Minstrels for several years.

One of her greatest pleasures in life was teaching. She loved young children and took great joy in teaching them piano and music theory lessons in her private studios in her homes in Rockville and Denton working as a substitute teacher in Montgomery County, she increased her visibility and grew her

teaching practice to include students from many of the elementary, middle and high schools. She had a particular love of teaching piano lessons to the special needs and autistic children who held a special place in her heart.

Her love of music and performing arts passed through to her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Many have studied and performed music professionally in different venues across the United States, and many grandchildren play multiple musical instruments and sing.

Despite her many accomplishments in music and theater, her greatest and by far her most lasting legacy is the gift of faith in Jesus Christ that she passed on to each of her children. No matter where the family lived, she made certain that her children had the opportunities to hear and learn about Jesus. All eight surviving children proclaim Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and are thankful that their faith in Jesus, in His sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness of sins and His resurrection from the dead enable each of them to live in hope of the resurrection of all the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Ever the eternal optimist, she faced the hardships and challenges of her life without worrying about the future, much to the chagrin and exasperation of her pragmatist mother. She never missed an opportunity to laugh even during the most difficult circumstances, often repeating “this too shall pass,” the words of comfort spoken by her great grandmother Anna Bell Dobson. “This is the day the Lord has made: we will rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118:24)” became her life song.

She is survived by eight of her nine children: Stacia Lee Gallagher (Martin), Heather Lynn Quillen (Howard), Cara Camille Purvis, William Claude Harless (deceased), Mary Beth Blackman (Brett), Russell Raymond Rhymmer (Pom), Sarah Grace Short (Jason), Stephen Wright Harless, and Anna Victoria Purvis (Zak). Her marriages to William Claude Covan, III and Larry Livingston

Harless, the fathers of her children, ended in divorce.

Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren include Sarah Elizabeth Ryan (Rob) and their son Owen Alexander; John Stephen Gallagher and his daughter Lillian Louise; Alyssa Nichole Collins (Adam) and their sons Byron Elliot, Oliver Franklin and Emmett Alexander; Celina Rose Scott; James Lucas Quillen; Allyson Leigh Scott (Drew) and their children Annora Renee and Maddux Andrew; Logan Paige Phillips (Jesse) and their son Wilder Anthony; Devon Ray Williams, Madeline Shay Williams; Elizabeth Hope, Abigail Joy and Rebecca Faith Blackman; Jackson Henry, Maxwell Finney, Lincoln David, Whitman James and Holland Annabelle Short; and Nathan Livingston, Isaac Russell and Clara Ashley Purvis.

Tribute Wall



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Sharon Lee Wright.*



November 24, 2025 at 12:24 AM



“ *I will miss Sharon. She was such a musically talented person which seemed like a natural gift. She sang and played beautifully. Surely the Lord saved her a special seat in the Heavenly choir. She is rejoicing with the Lord and her loved ones who have gone on before her with no pain or suffering any more.*



Carol Purvis

Carol Purvis - November 18, 2025 at 04:53 PM