



Betty Lou Jefferson

December 15, 1929 - November 17, 2023

Betty Lou Jefferson

December 15, 1929 – November 17, 2023

Betty Lou Brown Jefferson was born on December 15, 1929 in Detroit, Michigan. She was the only child of Fanny Merle (Sprouls) Brown and Manuel Brown. She attended Detroit's Sacred Heart Catholic School for her early education and later attended Howard University in Washington, DC.

As a young woman, Betty frequently appeared in plays and other dramatic performances. Betty was a voracious reader and a very accomplished writer. She was a poet and studied journalism. She was a youth columnist for the Detroit Courier newspaper, and in the late 1940's was the first African American hired as a clerical employee at Detroit's Fox Theater where she was employed as a switchboard operator. While at a party with friends in 1949, she met the love of her life, Horace Lee Jefferson. They were married in 1952 and were soon blessed with four children: Linda, Eric, Judith and Michael.

Betty was a loving mother and a devoted wife. She loved music, and once she discovered the Galloping Gourmet television show on channel 56, she enjoyed cooking. After her children started school, she started working as a substitute teacher at Custer Elementary School and later worked as a salesperson in the catalog department at Sears Roebuck in Highland Park.

With her meticulous attention to detail, she was a natural as an insurance billing specialist, both for her husband's dental practice and later for a surgeon's office.

Anyone who knew Betty knew that she loved mail: both sending it and receiving it, and if you were one of the lucky ones to be on her mailing list, you could count on her descriptive writing highlighting her wry and humorous wit and keen observations. She had a circle of close, life-long friends with whom she kept in touch by mail and with frequent phone calls. She enjoyed camping trips, traveling with her family throughout the U.S. and Canada, admiring the beauty and serenity of nature and the great outdoors. While her kids were busy with their swim lessons, Betty would frequently enroll herself in yoga and craft classes at the Highland Park YWCA. A long-time member of Gesu parish, she enjoyed fellowshiping with her Gesu Church family and served on the Leisure Group Committee.

Things that brought Betty joy: the music of Sarah Vaughn, Gloria Lynne & Tony Bennett; the color kelly green, the entire Peanuts Gang, especially Snoopy; the combination of dark chocolate and raspberries, Sander's lemon tarts, babies, a fresh stack of books from the library, a sale, and spending time with her family and her precious grandchildren. Betty Lou found it difficult to pass up antique, resale and consignment shops, where she was always on the lookout for unique and useful gifts for others.

Preceding her in death were her parents, Fanny and Manuel Brown, and her devoted husband, Horace. She leaves to cherish her memory her children, Linda Evans (Walter), Eric, Judith and Michael; grandchildren Scott M. Jefferson, Eric A. Jefferson, Albert E. Jefferson, Jala M. Jefferson, Edward C. Jefferson and Jade M. Jefferson; nieces Gloria Jean Taylor (George), Rhonda Taylor, Carol Jefferson and Melanie Jefferson; a nephew, Jesse Kevin Taylor and many other relatives and friends.

The family of Betty Lou Jefferson acknowledges the kind expressions of love and concern from all the friends and family who have shared their condolences.

Private services are being held. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

The family wishes to thank the Staff and Administration of St. Anne's Mead Memory Care Home for the skilled and compassionate care and family-like atmosphere that Betty enjoyed; the Oakland Hospice team for their resourcefulness and professionalism during her final months; and a very special thanks to Mrs. Vikki Lockhart Calvert for her unwavering devotion and genuine Christian care and companionship that brought such joy and comfort to Horace and Betty's last years.

For those who wish to remember Betty Lou in a special way, her family requests that gifts be made in her memory to St. Anne's Mead Angel Fund, (memo line: In memory of Betty L Jefferson) and mailed to: St. Anne's Mead, 16106 W 12 Mile Rd. Southfield, MI 48076.

Arrangements entrusted to:
Kemp Funeral Home
Southfield, MI

Tribute Wall

IS

“ Eric, I am sorry to hear of the loss of your Mom. It can be said that the loss of an elderly parent is so very difficult because they have shared their love, joy, and support in the journey of each family member's lives for such a long time. Her obituary describes a truly accomplished and loving mother. I can image the beautiful reception in Heaven she has received from Christ, Our Lord.

Ivan Sims (Ford Team Member)

Ivan Sims - November 29, 2023 at 04:08 PM

VP

“ Sending our condolences to the Jefferson family during this very difficult time. May you feel the love of God uplift you and hold your hearts.

Valerie & Tim Piontek (Ford Family)

Valerie Piontek - November 29, 2023 at 07:50 AM



VC

“ Vicky Patrick Crosby.... lit a candle in memory of Betty Lou Jefferson

Vicky Patrick Crosby.... - November 28, 2023 at 10:30 PM



JC

“ I am so sorry to hear of your mother's passing. She was just a gem! And it was evident that she was a tremendous mother based on the family that she raised. I have been blessed to know her even just a little in her later years. May she rest in peace after a life well-lived.

Jane Collins - November 27, 2023 at 03:38 PM

BE

“ Barbara E. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Betty Lou Jefferson.

Barbara E. - November 25, 2023 at 02:18 PM