



Frances Ann Diehl Tannehill

September 24, 1927 - October 25, 2020

Frances Ann Diehl Tannehill, 93, of Salisbury, passed away Sunday, October 25, 2020 at The Lutheran Home at Trinity Oaks.

She was born Frances Ann Diehl on September 24, 1927 in Huntington, West Virginia with a silver spoon in her mouth. Her father, Francis Diehl was a prominent architect; her mother, Bess Trahern Diehl, a housewife. They were surprised to find each other and have a family late in life. The spoon was yanked by the Depression and further complicated by the sudden death of her father. Her mother worked as a stenographer to keep shelter, and Fran, at the ripe age of 10 took over the household, preparing meals and cleaning. She loved Shirley Temple and her cat, Skippy.

They ate corn meal mush and navy beans, food she despised to this day, and when they had an orange, they split it and watered it down. Fran had two dresses with several collars that were replaced for a different look. They missed their daddy who was a violinist and consoled themselves with family music, Fran's sister Bette on piano, brother John on bass, and Fran singing alto.

In 1949, she graduated with honors from Marshall in Huntington, W.Va. with a degree in Zoology and had an eye toward medical school. But as the Korean War began picking off young men in her hometown, she migrated instead to Fort Meade, MD where she was known for running the strictest serology lab on the base.

She met Bob Tannehill in the chapel choir at Ft. Meade and on November 27,

1953, they combined families. She committed to lab work to put Bob through medical school and in, 1962, they moved to Salisbury, N.C. because it was halfway between his family in Georgia and hers in West Virginia. They joined St. John's Lutheran Church because it had the best choir. She commenced to sing in it and other local choirs for the next 45 years.

They were married for 10 years before welcoming a son, Bruce and two daughters, Myra and Amy later in life.

Fran dedicated herself with steadfast good cheer and an unwavering belief in the better nature of humankind to the country club life, the church, a sewing club that hadn't glimpsed a pattern in 40 years, the quilters' guild, the Medical Society, various book clubs, the Dismal Swamp Group, and the Concert Choir. Her favorite pieces to sing were the "Messiah" and Brahms' "German Requiem." She often rose above small-town networking pressures and was truly a loyal and loving friend and dedicated group member.

It is estimated she made 250 quilts for friends and family with at least 50 of those going to Rowan Helping Ministries and the women's shelter.

In 1983, she became Coordinator of Chaplains at Rowan Regional Hospital, making sure there was a chaplain available at all times should anyone in the hospital or their loved ones need spiritual support. This task and every other organizational one she was given, she took on with the determination of a terrier, straightening out the systems and otherwise making things better for the person who would follow.

She was a lifelong learner and avid world traveler. She took Old Testament and New Testament courses at Catawba, and computer courses at Rowan Tech. She traveled to the Holy Land, Germany, Jamaica, Greece, Scotland, Newfoundland, British Columbia, England, Wales and other places.

She was a gifted party thrower, hosting countless cocktail, bridge, and choir parties, numerous cookouts and gigantic annual regatta parties at their High Rock Lake house, trips to the beach house near Charleston, SC and too many dinner parties to ever attempt to count. She had a constant stream of visitors, family, musicians, foreign exchange students, missionaries, and the

occasional stray – all were welcome in her home with the same generosity she would apply to a dignitary.

Besides her parents, Mrs. Tannehill is predeceased by her brother John Diehl and her sister Bette Diehl Fleming. The family is comprised of her husband, Robert Tannehill; children Bruce Tannehill (Rita) of Augusta, Georgia; Myra Tannehill (Dean Hamilton) of Woodleaf, N.C., and Amy Tannehill Elkin (Bill) of Mooresville. She is the proud grandmother of six: Meredith (Caleb) Harmon, Jacob (Andrea) Tannehill, Kristin Tannehill, Katie Elkin, Lily Elkin, and JP Hamilton.

In recent years at Trinity Oaks Lutheran Community, she headed up the re-planting of landscaping beds at the apartment entrances, conducted sewing classes, and founded a quilting group that has made over 100 quilts for children's hospitals and women's shelters. She was a compassionate friend, visiting the sick and shut-in and singing in funeral choirs.

The family would like to extend thanks to Trinity Oaks, especially the Assisted Living Staff who cared for her so diligently, and to Trellis hospice.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to St. John's Lutheran Church Music Fund (200 W. Innes Street, Salisbury, NC 28144) and/or Friends of Yadkin Path Montessori Foundation (yadkinpathmontessori.org/support-us).

The private family service for Frances D. Tannehill will be live-streamed at 2pm on Friday, October 30th. Go to www.stjohns-salisbury.org to witness online.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Tannehill family. Online condolences may be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com.

Tribute Wall

MC

“ *My deepest condolences. Fran and Bob were favorite friends of my parents..Mildred and Verus Cummins. (Both have passed)
Fran made this for my mother whose favorite flowers were daisies.*



maryan cummins - January 27, 2021 at 03:48 PM

MP

“ *Bob, I am so sorry to hear of the loss of your loving wife. May she Rest In Peace. My prayers are there for you. Maria Perkins*

Maria Perkins - October 30, 2020 at 01:18 PM

AD

“ *Love and prayers to all the family. I will always remember Fran as a fun and loving person who made me feel welcome any time we were together.*

Ann Duncan

Ann Duncan - October 30, 2020 at 09:47 AM

SW

“ *Dr. Tannehill and Family:
My deepest sympathy on the loss of your loved one. Please know that you are in my thoughts and prayers as you recall her well-lived life*

Shirley Wilks - October 30, 2020 at 01:20 AM

GB

“ Aunt Fran was so dear to us. We love her and will always cherish all the great times we had with her and all of you. She was loving, fun, witty, kind, encouraging, and so very talented in many ways. She put on the best family reunions. Her Christian example of living life and loving family and friends summons us to do our daily best. We appreciate her work in getting the research done about our ancestors. It's fascinating. She had a beautiful alto voice and her quilting was amazing and beautiful.

Our hearts and prayers are with you Uncle Bob, Bruce, Myra, Amy and your families. We know you will always carry Fran's love and good memories in your hearts. We have you in our daily prayers and ask God to comfort and guide each of you.

Love and Prayers,
Steve & Gayle Benjamin

Gayle Benjamin - October 29, 2020 at 05:43 PM

SB

“ May God Bless your family & give you peace & comfort! I am so very sorry for your loss!

Yours in Christ,
Susan Miller Beeker

Susan Beeker - October 28, 2020 at 08:50 PM

VB

“ It was a wonderful day for the Helms family when Bob and Fran moved across the street from us 58 years ago. Bruce was 2 and we rejoiced when Myra and Amy were born. We have valued our friendship over the years, shared lots of Holidays together, celebrated many accomplishments, and supported each other during sad and difficult times. Fran was a wonderful woman and will be greatly missed. We were so blessed to have known and loved her for such a long time. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you.

Vicki Butler

Vicki Butler - October 28, 2020 at 07:08 PM

CH

“ You are remembered fondly, Fran. Say hello to Libby and JP. Rest in peace.

Charlie Hoffmire

Charles Hoffmire - October 27, 2020 at 07:20 PM

SM

“ Bob and family, I'm so sorry for your loss of dear Fran. She made me so welcome when I first came to St. John's choir many years ago. I enjoyed sitting by her for so many years. She will be greatly missed. Much love to you all. Susan Myers

Susan Myers - October 27, 2020 at 05:22 PM

TM

“ *The Staff & Friends of Agape+Kure Beach Ministry purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Frances Ann Diehl Tannehill.*



The Staff & Friends of Agape+Kure Beach Ministry - October 27, 2020 at 04:16 PM

BL

“ *Our community has been greatly enriched by the life of service Fran brought us. I was honored to sing with her and get to know her family through community theater musicals. Fran was a fierce woman long before it was popular. I admired her intelligence, wit, commitment and zest for life. May her family feel God's comfort as well as the love and support of those whose lives were touched by this amazing person.*

Becky Lippard - October 27, 2020 at 11:12 AM

GW

“ *I will miss her so very much and our dinners once a month either at Trinity Oaks or at our home.*
Gene and Lenny

Gene Wolfe - October 26, 2020 at 05:40 PM



“ *Peace Eternal Wreath was purchased for the family of Frances Ann Diehl Tannehill.*



October 26, 2020 at 04:05 PM