



Phyllis M. B. Taylor

January 15, 2024

Phyllis Brooks Taylor was born under a lucky star in Poughkeepsie, New York on April 7, 1937, and died at home, in the company of loved ones, in Mount Laurel, New Jersey on January 15, 2024. She was 86 years old and packed every nano-second of her 1032 months on earth with love, service, adventure, good food, great books, a strong work ethic, humility, a finely honed sense of humor, and a perpetual smile. In an era when the apex of a woman's aspirations was to make a good martini and have dinner on the table by 6:00, Phyllis was a powerful, independent, self-made woman.

After a childhood spent in Poughkeepsie, Phyllis moved with her family to Scarsdale, New York where she attended 9th - 12th grades at Scarsdale High School (Class of 1955). "Our Miss Brooks," as she was known at SHS, was the Drum Majorette for the marching band, played saxophone in The Jazz Band, and served as an attendant on the Homecoming Court. After school, she played the piano and attended the prestigious Julliard School of Music in New York City.

Upon high school graduation, Phyllis went to DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, intending to pursue a law degree, but at a time when women made up only 3% of the American Judiciary System (and only 21% of American women went to college at all!), she was discouraged from following that dream, and so, with her typical pluck and determination, she forged another path, earning a BA Degree in Education, graduating with honors, and later, a Master's Degree in Education Administration. At DePauw, she served once again on the Homecoming Court and rose through the ranks to become President of her chapter of Alpha Chi Omega Sorority and eventually President of PanHellenic. Phyllis met her husband, and after graduation, they moved to Waukesha, Wisconsin where their daughter, Deborah was born.

A few years later, the family moved to New Concord, Ohio and welcomed a second child, Michael. Despite the culture shock of a city girl finding herself living in the country, Phyllis adapted to and thrived in the rural way of life and the realization of her calling:

TEACHING. She always saw potential in each of her students and worked diligently to ensure that each child was provided with the opportunity to fulfill their promise.

Phyllis was a thinker and a striver, always wanting to know more, to seize the day, take the initiative, and to experience life without regrets. Finding herself footloose after her divorce,

she moved overseas to teach abroad at a prominent international school, The American School, TASIS, outside of London, England. While there, another consuming passion of her life was born when she volunteered to chaperone trips with students, traveling and experiencing other cultures in Greece, the Netherlands, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia. Upon her return to the states, she moved from New Concord to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. She was the Middle School Director there until her departure to the Friends School, in Moorestown, NJ where she remained Lower School Director until her retirement.


Bitten and smitten by the Travel Bug, Phyllis spent the rest of her life feeding her wanderlust: Morocco, Budapest, Hungary, Prague, Czechoslovakia, and then south to Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the Galapagos Islands. Never one to sit and wait for something to happen, she continued her journeys and traveled with her daughter to the other side of the world, visiting her son in Seoul, South Korea, and "while in the neighborhood," popped in to visit Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Tahiti, and Bora-Bora, riding elephants and camels. On another occasion, she traveled to China, traveling by boat up the Yangtze River to see the sights of the country. A most memorable trip a few years later was in the company of her Scarsdale High School class of '55-ers with an escorted trip through Japan.

Well-heeled though she was, being with her family was always Phyllis' best and favorite adventure. She dearly loved her grandchildren, and they had an annual trip from their home to Hilton Head Island to spend time together during the summer months.

Phyllis lived a full life of purpose, zeal, gratitude, and determination, with a fervent sense of adventure that pushed the limits of endurance and comfort, always living in the moment. She impacted everyone in her life, friends, family, peers, and staff, and especially relished cards and letters from former students telling her of their gratitude for her guidance. To all who were lucky enough to know her, she was a mentor, a sage advisor, a fierce friend and advocate, a passionate and intentional helper, a soft and safe shoulder, a good listener, and a stellar example of creating a meaningful existence in a frequently harsh world. Her only really notable shortcoming was that she never made it to the continent of Antarctica.

In addition to a gigantic hole in the universe, Phyllis leaves behind her daughter Deborah Taylor, son Michael and daughter in law Tamala Taylor, her grandchildren, and legions of adoring friends. We love her so much and her legacy will continue to impact us for generations. To say that she will be greatly missed is an understatement, but lacking better words, those left behind will mourn and grieve until such day as the gratitude for having known and loved her outweighs the loss.

You can honor Phyllis' memory with a donation in her name to The Moorestown Friends School: <https://www.mfriends.org/ptaylor>,

and in lieu of flowers, you can take a friend out to lunch or a movie or to Paris, France.
Phyllis would have liked that. 

Cemetery Details

PRIVATE INTERMENT

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 27. 2:00 PM (ET)

Moorestown Friends Meeting House
118 East Main Street
Moorestown, NJ 08057

Tribute Wall

JJ

“ *Your mom was such a special woman. She had a kind heart and loved to interact with people. My parents were always happy to get together and share stories. I remember being at your house many times but one really stick out to me. Debbie's 40 birthday. It was nice reading all the funny cards and just sharing stories. Take care, Judy*

Judy Jordan - January 30, 2024 at 12:49 PM