



Bettelee F. Lewis

December 14, 1923 - June 16, 2016

Bettelee Mary Frahm Lewis, 92, of Kearney died Thursday, June 16, 2016 at CHI – Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney. Celebration of Life services will be Wednesday, June 22, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. at Horner Lieske McBride & Kuhl Funeral Home in Kearney. Memorials are suggested to Hastings Symphony Orchestra, Kearney Symphony Orchestra, Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, and Kearney YMCA. Visit www.hlmkfuneral.com to leave a tribute or message of condolence. Bettelee was born December 14, 1923 in Blue Hill, NE to Arthur and Hazel (Lovitt) Frahm. She was raised on a farm near Blue Hill until her father died in 1934. Her family relocated to Kearney and a year later moved to Fairfield, NE. She graduated from Kearney State College in 1947 and married Robert L. Lewis. She obtained her graduate degree in physical education and dance from the University of Wyoming in 1950. Bettelee began teaching in the Amherst Public Schools while still a student at Kearney State Teachers College. She taught in Shelton, Grand Island and Campbell before taking a position with the Wilcox Public Schools. She introduced a string program during her tenure at Wilcox – making Wilcox one of the smallest schools to have such a program. In Wilcox Bettelee also taught physical education, home economics and biology, and coached volleyball. In 1977 she became Orchestra Director and String Specialist for the Kearney Public Schools. She was the orchestra director in Kearney Public Schools until retiring in 1989. She also taught part time at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Bettelee has been a member of the Hastings Symphony

Orchestra for 78 years and a member of the Kearney Symphony Orchestra since 1941. She was inducted into the Nebraska Music Educators Hall of Fame in 1990 and was awarded the Kearney Hub Freedom Award in Education in 2015. Bettelee was an avid golfer at the Kearney Country Club, did volunteer work at The Archway and is a board member at the Kearney Family YMCA. She was a member of the EG Chapter of PEO. Surviving relatives include her daughter, Mary Lynn Lewis Sands of Topeka, KS, son, Ronald Lee Lewis of Saint Simons Island, Georgia, and grandchildren Britton and Amanda Lewis of Tampa, Florida. She was preceded in death by her parents and former husband Robert L. Lewis.

Tribute Wall



“ *Bettelee F. Lewis*

January 29, 2023 at 11:14 AM



“ *To add to my earlier comments: this a.m. on PBS Josh Groban sang "You'll Never Walk Alone". That brought back memories of Bettelee directing the Wilcox HS chorus. I seem to remember we sang that song numerous times. Such great meaning.*

Kathryn Reed - June 26, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ *Mrs. Lewis held, and holds such an important place in my life. Thanks to Mrs. Lewis, I love music in all its forms; I still play cello; I gained confidence; I experienced heart-breaking beauty when our school choir sang "How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place." Her legacy will continue through generations of her students.*

Jean Brooks Pokorny - June 23, 2016 at 12:00 AM



“ *No words can accurately express how grateful we are to have gotten to know Bettelee over the last 13 years of her volunteering at The Archway. She was an amazing individual and we will miss her greatly.*

Archway Staff and Volunteers - June 22, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Bettelee was an amazing person. I can't even imagin all the people she inspired throughout her career and lifetime. Very special person and we are so lucky to have been a part of her family.*

Jeff Sample - June 22, 2016 at 12:00 AM

CK

“ *Ron and Mary Lyn,
I was so sad to hear the news that Bettelee had passed away. She was a wonderful friend, neighbor, and second 'mom' to Sarah and me when we lived in Kearney. She was quite the role model for living a full and active life!*

Carol Keenan - June 22, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AL

“ *Mrs. Lewis was a blessing to every student she taught giving them the gift of music. She taught myself, my husband, my brother and my mother (MaryAnne Heidemann). I think of Mrs. Lewis often as my name is now Lewis and when I'm called Mrs. Lewis, my amazing teacher always comes to mind. She will always be here with us as her music will carry on in her students.*

Andrea Lewis - June 21, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ *Betelee was an amazing soul. She lived life to the fullest! I loved seeing her and hearing of her wonderful adventures and stories of the past about our family. She always had a hilarious story for us. My mother, Kathleen Cox, was so sad to hear of her cousin passing. She had so many wonderful memories with her. We are so blessed to have her in our family. She will never be forgotten. Our prayers go out to you Mary Lynn and Ronnie.*

Lisa Smith - June 21, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ Wonderful lady who lead a very active and productive life. She influenced so many people and made many a better human being from their association with her. Marilyn and I loved knowing and teaching with her. Never a dull moment and lots of Wilcox History. R.I.P. Betty Lee

Larry Jensen - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AN

“ What a blessing to those who were touched by her musical talents! She was my first music teacher at Wilcox, then I sang in the church choir she directed at Funk. So enjoyed working with her, and in later years, hearing her play with the Kearney Symphony. She leaves behind a rich, musical legacy and many, many memories who were lucky enough to have had the pleasure of being taught, or working with her.

Anne (Hargis) Nau - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BJ

“ I'm so sorry that I am unable to attend Bettelee's memorial service on Wednesday. I will be on the road early that morning to Springfield, IL. I do wish for you to know just how glad I was that Bettelee performed the last two concerts of the Hastings Symphony's 90th season this past April. She was a wonderful spirit, and in fact all of us will greatly miss her presence on the stage. Think about it: Of the 90 years that the HSO has performed concerts, Bettelee was there for 78 of those seasons. Truly remarkable, and something I'm quite certain has never been matched. I loved her smile, her support, and her generosity. Thank you, Bettelee, for making my time as conductor of the HSO both memorable and complete. I know Heaven's music is a little brighter and spirited with your presence from here to eternity.

Byron Jensen - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PS

“ Sending sympathy to Bettelee's family. She was a wonderful teacher and brought out confidence and music ability in every student. She taught 3 generations of my family. I will always remember her.

Phyllis Schwaninger - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

BH

“ She will be missed we were good neighbors for many years and mail box friends we would always stop and talk when getting our mail,

BRETT HANSEN - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PB

“ What a magnificent woman! Smart, funny, talented, and a real pro. She taught me so much. I feel fortunate to have known her. :)

Pam (Nicholson) Bordner - June 19, 2016 at 12:00 AM

KR

“ She will never be forgotten. She was the "best thing that ever happened to Wilcox". I teacher and mentor.

Kay Bergstrom Reed - June 19, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ Bettelee was a wonderful person. She was always there for her kids and grandkids. And she was willing to help anybody, She love to visit and her door was always open, if you could catch her at home. The only grass that grew under her feet was on a golf course! She m will be missed!

Sue A Sands-Buss - June 18, 2016 at 12:00 AM

GT

“ Our hearts and thoughts are with the family. She was the best neighbor ever and we loved Bettelee a lot. Always enjoy talking to her and helping her out. She always had good stories and life experiences to tell. We will miss you a lot. Love Glen and Rod

Glen Gatz and Rodney Thompson - June 18, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RV

“ May God grant His love and peace to all those who share memories of the life of this wonderful lady.
My love and prayers to you, her immediate family, as you cherish the life of one so very dear.

Ramona (Anderson) Voutas - June 17, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ Mrs. Lewis will live on in the lives of all her former students. What a life she's had. God Bless.

Melinda. Ferree - June 17, 2016 at 12:00 AM