



# Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins

FEB 27, 1936 - NOV 11, 2016



Scan to Visit



DICKEN, DOVIN & REBER JONES  
FUNERAL & CREMATION CENTER

# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 6



# Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins

FEB 27, 1936 - NOV 11, 2016

## Betty Jenkins Obituary

Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins, a career librarian who held a lifelong love for the arts, was born in the 3rd Ward section of Houston, TX. Her father was an aspiring college administrator; her mother was a trained librarian. Betty and her younger sister, Patricia, grew up on historically black college campuses in Houston and in Hampton, VA and just after World War II the family lived in Monrovia where her father headed the American Legation to Liberia from 1946-1948. From there the family returned to Texas where her father became the first president of Texas Southern University in Houston. Betty's high school years were spent at Scattergood Friends School in Iowa. This time gave her a lifelong respect for Quaker principles though she never became a member of the Religious Society of Friends. Letters to her mother from that time reveal a young woman who was studious and interested in social justice, particularly for African-Americans. After spending her first college year at Grinnell in Iowa she transferred to Barnard College in New York City where she earned a BA degree in History. After the baccalaureate she earned an MS in Library Service from Columbia University and later an MA in American History from New York University. Before and after marriage to her husband, Del, she worked in the reference and cataloging departments of college and special libraries in Washington, D.C. and New York City, and she was active in a variety of professional organizations. (She was an intern at the Brooklyn College Library during her library training and a colleague of Kendal resident, Jane Moore, who was on staff there at the time.) In Washington, she worked in the Howard University Library with Mrs. Dorothy Porter who was one of the foremost experts on African American literature. In the course of her career the library settings she found most professionally and personally satisfying were at Metropolitan Applied Research Center (MARC) and The City College of City University of New York. MARC was a consortium of social scientists founded in the



## Obituary

**Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins**

FEB 27, 1936 - NOV 11, 2016

late 1960's by the social psychologist, Kenneth B. Clark, whose doll study research had been influential in affecting the school desegregation decision of the Supreme Court in 1954. At MARC, Betty established and managed the library to support the organization's research on contemporary urban problems. For one of the research projects, a colleague and she compiled an annotated bibliography documenting the antecedents and status of the black separatism controversy. This work was published under the auspices of MARC by Greenwood Press. Later she was a reference librarian and department head at Morris Cohen Library of City College. There in addition to her reference and administrative duties she collaborated with faculty producing special projects and exhibits. One such program, funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, was a series of public symposia on the origin and evolution of African American book publishing. Her career as a librarian, though satisfying, only allowed her to express a part of herself as a person. She was sensitive to the visual arts and gifted in the use of her hands. Since childhood she had dabbled in drawing and weaving among other things, but when she retired she returned to an early interest in pottery, which she had begun in high school. She focused on work with clay when she came to Kendal and she flourished under the guidance and friendship of Oberlin pottery master Mari Kuroda and Kendal resident, Joyce Parker. In addition, to her crafts interests she enjoyed travel and a number of aspects of cultural life in northeast Ohio. None of her professional or avocational interests superseded her devotion to her family. She was a loving wife, mother, sister, and daughter. Nothing gave her more joy than working to create a beautiful home where her family was comfortable and friends felt welcome. The brightness of her smile which we all knew so well was the core of her character, and it will remain with us. She is survived by her husband, Adelbert, her son, Christopher, a nephew, Stefan and his wife Alexandra, and a number of cousins on her mother's and father's sides of the family. A memorial service honoring Betty will be Saturday, March 4, 2017 at 2:30 p.m. in the Heiser Auditorium at Kendal at Oberlin. Arrangements were in the care of Dicken Funeral Home and Cremation Service, Elyria. SERVICES Memorial Service Saturday, March 4, 2017 2:30 PM Kendal at Oberlin 600 Kendal Dr. Oberlin, OH 44074



## Obituary

**Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins**

FEB 27, 1936 - NOV 11, 2016

---

To send flowers  
to the family or plant a tree  
in memory of Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins, please visit our floral store.

[Read More](#)



## Tribute Wall

**Betty Jo Lanier Jenkins**

FEB 27, 1936 - NOV 11, 2016



**Carol Sicherman** posted:

Betty was my classmate at Barnard, and how I wish I had known her better. She was quiet, reserved -not quite herself in a college where there were hardly any students of color. When I read Christopher's wedding announcement in the NY Times, her memory came back. What a beautiful and generous life she led!

June 8 at 8:00 PM



**Evelyn Boddien** posted:

Mrs. Jenkins was my first supervisor here at City College Library. She was always so gentle, warm and kind to me. I will always be thankful and honored to have worked with her. May God comfort you in your sorrow.

February 26 at 8:00 PM



# **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Betty by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



**Scan to Visit**



DICKEN, DOVIN & REBER JONES  
FUNERAL & CREMATION CENTER