



# Roberta "Bobbi" Anne Holliday

JAN 14, 1936 - JUL 15, 2024



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 7



# Roberta "Bobbi" Anne Holliday

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## Roberta "Bobbi" Holliday Obituary

Roberta "Bobbi" Anne Holliday, 88, of Elyria, passed away peacefully early in the morning July 15, 2024, at The Normandy Care Center in Rocky River, Ohio, where she had been a resident for the past two years. She was born January 14, 1936, to Fletcher and Nell (née McMillian) Holliday at Elyria Memorial Hospital. She was the youngest of seven children. Her two eldest siblings were her maternal half-brother, Clifford Cheshire Cathey, and her half-sister, Lucille (Lulu) Glynn Cathey, children of Nell McMillian and Clifford Jennings Cathey. Eleanor, Dorothy (Dotty), Phyllis (Fifi), and Richard (Dicky) were her full biological siblings. Bobbi graduated from Elyria High School, where she was a flutist in the marching band, and attended Kent State University and Mary Washington University. Then, she returned home to Elyria to help her mother, where she completed her Bachelor of Arts in education at Baldwin Wallace University. She later went to Case Western Reserve University, where she studied music and worked toward her master's degree. She also studied flute privately at the Cleveland Institute of Music. At age 22, she worked temporarily for an insurance company at Cleveland Hopkins Airport, where she met Robert Taylor Thompson, a dashing, slender, athletic 6'2" blue-eyed 22-year-old graduate of Lakewood H.S. who worked for Eastern Airlines after returning home from being stationed in Alaska as a seaman in the U.S. Coast Guard. They soon married and had four children: Brian, Brad, Leslie, and Robert (Andy) Thompson. Bobbi was a beloved yoga and flute teacher who left a lasting impression on her students through her sense of humor, purpose, and passion. She had a yoga studio in Elyria called Ganesha. She taught at Lorain County Community College, where she started the first yoga class for college credit, and at St. Andrews Episcopal Church for several decades and several other locations. She also taught in Salzburg, Austria, for a few weeks every summer with The Cultural Studies Academy out of Slippery Rock



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College for several years. Bobbi was a teacher, a lecturer, a poet, an artist, a traveler, an avid reader, and the author of four books: *The Grandmother Who Stood On Her Head*, 1985, *A Course in Yoga and Metaphysics*, 1987, *Archives of my Soul*, 2007, and *Yoga Basics with Bobbi Holliday*, which is full of stick figures in yoga positions, explanations of the poses, and healthy recipes, handwritten in 1976. She was a musician who recorded several tapes and CDs: *The Light Weavers Celestial Awakenings* with Jan Ennes, *Heart Song* - flute improvisations with ocean surf, *Odyssey*, and 60-minute *Guided Yoga*, to name a few. Bobbi hosted and attended many retreats in various locations, including Lily Dale, NY, the world's largest spiritualist community, Kelleys Island, The Himalayan Institute, Kripalu, The Expanding Light Retreat at Ananda Village, and The Gulf Shores of Alabama. She was a member of the Three Arts Club of Lakewood, The Elyria Musical Arts Society, and the International Platform Association (IPA), with whom she annually attended conventions in Washington, DC., and she was a founding member of the Great Lakes Gnosis Society. She taught her flute students that music is more than pleasing sounds; it's a modality for soothing our current woes. Bobbi was a stylish lady who wouldn't leave the house without being well dressed and wearing lipstick in her favorite shade of red. When Bobbi discovered the book *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramhansa Yogananda, she took a second look when she saw the cover with an image of a long-haired yogi from India with glowing eyes; her life was changed forever. Bobbi was one of the first to teach yoga in Northeast Ohio. It was the seventies, and her sisters thought it was weird and begged her to call it Bobbi's Stretch Class instead of Yoga. In later years, they changed their minds. Ever the generous heart, thirty years ago, she was asked by a new yoga teacher in town whether she thought there was enough interest in yoga to teach here, and she responded, "If there's a yoga teacher on every corner, there would not be too many." Another quote she shared with her students: "Free your tears while scrubbing floors or making dinner; just keep moving forward." Another was, "You and I don't have the luxury of negative thoughts." At 5'2" with a petite curvy frame, short dark curly hair (except for at age 46 when she went blonde for a while after her amicable divorce from Bob,) brown eyes, and fair skin, she modeled yoga poses, belly breathing, and



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pranayama techniques while encouraging her students to ease into deeper stretches, inhale deeply, and exhale completely. Her main message was to work on becoming fully conscious, forgiving of self and others, being in the present moment, positively affirming “I am well,” and “I am happy.” Bobbi has touched, transformed, uplifted, and empowered hundreds, if not thousands, of lives. She had life-long students who became life-long friends. Although teaching and lecturing came naturally to her, she considered herself a guide who provided a safe and supportive environment for physical, emotional, and spiritual growth—always encouraging her students to trust their inner guidance. Nearly every morning, she would walk across W. River St., from her residence at Cherry Ridge Condominiums to IHOP to have “Bobbi’s Breakfast Special,” a dish named after her; it was sourdough toast, two poached eggs, sliced avocado, and steamed spinach - she sat there and leisurely enjoyed reading the newspaper and doing the crossword puzzle in pen. She would go to one of her favorite haunts in the evening, where her Chardonnay was already there before reaching the table or bar stool. She ventured out for live music at places such as Maxwell’s, NightTown, Club Isabella’s, Sammy’s, Johnny’s Downtown, etc., and would often bring her son, Brad, and or her daughter, Leslie. More recently, Brad and Leslie have taken her to music and dining venues such as The Bopstop, Forest City Brewery, Treelawn Social Club, Johnny’s Downtown, The Music Box to see her son, Brian, who’s a keyboardist in Ball & Chain: The Janis Joplin Experience & Rock N Roll Show, and Blue Note Jazz Club NY while visiting her daughter and son-in-law Broadway Actor/Singer Walter Charles. She enjoyed watching her son, Brad (The Balloon Vibe), entertain children and adults while twisting balloons into delightful shapes. Bobbi would bump into someone who recognized her practically wherever she went, and laughter and hugs were shared. This habit of going out started in early childhood when she would knock on a neighbor’s door on Longfellow St. and ask for bread and peanut butter! Bobbi is grandmother to Ben, Mike, Sean, Justin, Seth, Mariah, and Sierra and great-grandmother to Kennedy, Cameron, Ava, and Piper. Roberta Anne Holliday was The Grandmother Who Stood on Her Head, who “saw things from a different perspective and was often inwardly reflective. She sought to grow in invisible ways, often attuning to invisible rays. She forgot to bake cookies and



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bread - she made tofu spread! Grandmother loved to meditate and daily (well, almost) honored her date. Kisses and hugs sent out through space as Grandmother sat in her meditation place.

I give you one more platitude: expand your mind, and you are there! Where? Wherever you want to be!" - Excerpts from her book, The Grandmother Who Stood On Her Head.

A Celebration of Life will be Sunday, August 11, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 300 Third Street, Elyria, Ohio.

To send flowers  
to the family or plant a tree  
in memory of Roberta "Bobbi" Anne Holliday, please visit our floral store.

[Read More](#)



## Tribute Wall

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AH

**A Memorial Tree Was Planted For Roberta "Bobbi" Anne Holliday** posted:

A Memorial Tree was planted for Roberta "Bobbi" Anne Holliday We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ the staff at Dicken Funeral Home & Cremation Service Join in honoring their life - plant a memorial tree

April 22 at 8:57 AM

MK

**Michael Kelch** posted:

Bobbi was truly an amazing person. I often reflect back to when I took her yoga classes in Rocky River, an enlightening time for me. I always enjoyed her perspective on life. She was so helpful when I needed an opinion on a difficult subject. She would say to me "Remember to breath, you'll get through it"

July 8 at 12:54 PM

CU

**Carol Urmanic** posted:

Sorry for you loss. I enjoyed many of Bobbi's Yoga classes over the years.

August 11 at 9:49 AM

CH

**Catherine Hammond** posted:

Leslie, Brian, Bradley, and Andy, I offer condolences to all of you for the loss of your mother. This account of her life with its vibrant details mirrors the vibrant life she lead. Leslie, I know you wrote it with love. My mother, your aunt Eleanor, was eighteen and had already moved out of the house when Bobbi was born. I imagine the Celebration of Life in August will reflect the affection many felt for her. All my best wishes.

July 29 at 1:12 PM



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**Susan-Jones Samuelson** posted:

I came to meet Bobbi as a young child starting to play the flute. She was recommended as a private teacher and so I began private lessons with her. As a result, I became an accomplished flutist. I truly admired her calm demeanor and continued private lessons with her through my senior year of high school. I won many first place awards in local competitions. In addition, I would babysit her children who were a true delight, especially Leslie. She was a spitting image of her mother. I am thankful for having the opportunity to be a student of Bobbi and to this day I think of her and grateful that I was able to learn her teachings and wisdom. God Bless and Rest in Peace Bobbi. Forever in my prayers. Susan

July 24 at 10:29 AM



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

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



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