



## Georgina Moon Hager

August 6, 2023

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Georgina Moon Hager, 92, died in the early hours of Sunday, August 6. She was known as Georgie to her friends, George to her husband, and Gi Gi to her patient and generous caretakers.

Georgina was born in Washington Park, Illinois, the only child of Byron Tilden Moon and Mildred Neureuther Moon. She graduated in 1947 from Thomas Carr Howe High School in Indianapolis, then entered the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music (CCM).

Georgina was a highly accomplished coloratura soprano who performed with the St. Louis Metropolitan Opera and the Cincinnati Summer Opera, as well as the Cincinnati Music-Drama Guild. She won both recording and performing contracts; and served during her college years as an officer of the Delta Chapter of Phi Beta, the professional music sorority.

Georgina performed leading roles in performances of Rigoletto, Hansel and Gretel, The Medium, La Traviata, Lakme, Barber of Seville, Tales of Hoffman, Madame Butterfly, The Marriage of Figaro, and other classical operas.

Even her laughter was musical, leaping easily beyond high "C." Sharing a joke became a performance of "Una voce poco fa," with Georgina starring as Rosina.

"She didn't learn to laugh like that overnight," a family friend once observed.

In 1952, Georgie was a hired soloist for the First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati where she met her future husband, a passionate amateur musician, among the tenors. Richard Ellsworth Hager was eight years her senior, a WWII vet and a brilliant newly hired chemical engineer at Proctor & Gamble. They were married for 32 years before his death, and Georgie went on to live as many more years, as a widow.

Her talent and credentials put her in association with most of the city's preeminent broadcast and classical performers. Among them was Rod Serling, with whom she worked at WLW, then a combined radio and TV station in the former COMEX building at Ninth and Elm Streets. In New York, she memorably auditioned for "The Medium," before the composer himself, Gian Carlo Menotti. A sampling of Georgie's performances can be heard here: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZQEBHmG0q\\_ih11A15cd3CsNcP2LsE7TG](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZQEBHmG0q_ih11A15cd3CsNcP2LsE7TG)

Georgie's life was changed forever in 1960, when her devoted parents were killed in a head-on collision caused by a drunk driver. Her father had been owner of the Western Auto store in Charleston, Illinois. He was a 32nd degree Mason, a member of Eastern Star, Rotary, Elk, Moose and Chamber of Commerce. Her mother was a member of Eastern Star and the Charleston Woman's Club. The couple had been returning from an Eastern Star function with friends, one of whom also died instantly.

Georgie, like her parents, found meaning in community. She was a member of many performing ensembles and three music clubs to which she committed countless hours of effort: Matinee Musicale, Wyoming Music Club, and the Clef Music Club. She was a frequent performer, officer, and patron to them all. Over many years, Georgina was a soloist for classical concerts, churches, temples and private music venues throughout the city and region. She taught voice as a faculty member of CCM, and fostered the musical talents of all her children.

Music became a family enterprise. Neighbors remarked with delight at the

strains drifting on summer days from the open windows of the family's Tudor home: piano, voice and trumpet. Come suppertime, Georgie called her brood indoors with operatic recitative, to avoid straining her voice.

As her children grew and moved off, Georgie found a constant companion in the family's French Bassett Hound, Chloe. She stayed in touch with current events but had a particular fondness for classic TV programs like Dragnet, Bonanza, Magnum PI, and Perry Mason. Her favorite movie was "Gaslight." A multi-skilled crafter, Georgie loved color and yarn, and even better, colorful yarn. She spent many contented hours crocheting afghans, which she gifted to her friends, family, church and other charitable organizations. She collected craft supplies of many types but, her chief interest was in scissors. She almost always wore a pair on a lanyard around her neck and would no sooner be without them than her reading glasses.

Like many who are musical, Georgie was also mathematical. She was a skilled bridge player as a young performer, and remembered playing hands, in costume and stage make-up, as she waited in the wings for her cues at rehearsals. She also played very competitive duplicate bridge with her husband, Dick, for many years. They were known for hosting many bridge matches at their home, which would go into the wee hours of the night.

Georgina leaves two sons and daughters: Terry (Victoria) of Dallas; Leslie (Eric) of Blacksburg; Wendy of Indianapolis; and Monte (Karen) of Blacksburg. She also leaves six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to support musical programming at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the New River Valley. Donations may be sent to: UUC, PO Box 10116, Blacksburg, VA 24062-0116, or they can be made online at this secure link: UUC Donations (<https://uucnrvalley.org/support/give/>)

# Tribute Wall

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“ I am sad to know that Georgie is gone, but so pleased to have known her. I met Georgie at First UU in Cincinnati. Along with my grandmother, Sallie East, she was part of a group of ladies who lunched after most Sunday services. I tagged along sometimes and always had a marvelous time. Georgie was so warm, and she listened patiently while I nattered away, as young children do. I have only the fondest memories of our time together, and I wanted to share my appreciation of Georgie with you.

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**Sarah East Dill** - October 01, 2023 at 12:29 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album Opera



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**Karen Hager** - September 08, 2023 at 09:13 AM