



Fern Barbara Shanno Cooney

December 4, 1934 - November 30, 2025

Fern Barbara Shanno Cooney, (nee Law), passed peacefully Sunday, November 30th, at her residence in Bryn Mawr, PA. Born December 4th, 1934, in Detroit, MI to James and Fern (nee Schott), Law, Mrs. Cooney was raised with her beloved and recently deceased sister, Luanne, in Bloomsburg, PA. She graduated from The Kingswood School in Bloomfield Hills, MI, and attended The University of Michigan where she earned a B.A. in Music (Voice and Opera). While attending school, she joined Pi Beta Phi sorority, and was a soloist with The Michigan Singers, touring throughout the U.S., including a performance at Carnegie Hall.

After graduation, Barbara relocated to the Philadelphia area where she taught kindergarten at The Agnes Irwin School, met and married her first husband, George Shanno, and started a family together, having two children. She continued with her love of vocal performance, singing principal roles with The Rittenhouse Opera Society, Suburban Opera Company, Gilbert and Sullivan Players, and The Savoy Company of Philadelphia, with whom she toured England and Scotland. Mrs. Cooney performed on stages and in theaters too numerous to mention, including Longwood Gardens, The Philadelphia Academy of Music, and The Ocean City New Jersey Music Pier. Her passion for inspiring a love and appreciation of music in others led her to join Young Audiences Inc., where she performed for school students. Barbara also adored performing in many area senior centers, where she was always well

received. Additionally, she was a member of the Mu Phi Epsilon foundation for the promotion and advancement of music and served on the board of directors of The Theodore Presser Home for retired music teachers.

In addition to her musical career, Barbara earned her real estate license and enjoyed a short but successful career with Hoopes Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate in Wayne, PA. Through her real estate connections, she met her future husband, William Cooney. They were married in 1991, until Mr. Cooney's passing in 1998. It was during these years that Barbara took on the challenge of opening The Gourmet's Choice, a deli / catering and gourmet food items shop in Gateway Shopping Center, Wayne, PA.

Mrs. Cooney was fortunate to live at Beaumont at Bryn Mawr for the last 25 years of her life, where she was loved by both staff and residents alike. She was known as "the whistler" or "the song-bird", as she would often spontaneously burst into song at the slightest provocation, and would often sing a hymn at the conclusion of Sunday services at Beaumont. Barbara's indomitable spirit, infectious positivity, and unrelenting cheerfulness were on full display to anyone fortunate enough to have spent time with her, and she will be greatly missed by all whose lives she touched.

She is survived by her daughter, Vaughn Honigman (James), son, George Shanno (Linda), and grandchildren - Caroline, Erin, Graham, and Katherine.

Funeral service will be held Saturday, December 6th, 2025, at St. David's Episcopal Church (Old Church), Wayne, PA at 11:00 am.

Cemetery Details

Adjoining Churchyard

Previous Events

Funeral Service

DEC 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. David's Episcopal Church
763 South Valley Forge Road
Wayne, PA 19087

Tribute Wall



“ *Virginia Campbell lit a candle in memory of Fern Barbara Shanno Cooney* ”



Virginia Campbell - December 06, 2025 at 12:14 AM