

*Celebrating The Life  
Of*



*Judith Elissa Wiggs*

*Sunrise*

*May 4, 1935*

*Sunset*

*July 1, 2013*

**Service**

*Monday, July 8, 2013 - 10:00 a.m.*

**McCALL'S BRONXWOOD FUNERAL HOME, INC.**

4035 Bronxwood Avenue • Bronx, New York

***Rev. Dr. Calvin E. Owens, Officiating***

# Obituary

Some called her JJ, some called her “J.E.W.,” some called her Judy and some affectionately called her “The Queen”—but whatever you called her, one thing you could agree on is that she was a great friend, and whenever you were in her presence you were in store for many laughs and great stories.

Born **Judith Elissa Johnson** on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1935, she was the only child of Harold Johnson and Norma Drakes, both Trinidadian immigrants. 211 W. 148 St. was the backdrop for the first 18 years of Judith’s life. Raised in Harlem, in “The Valley,” as it was called, Judith graduated from P.S. 90 and P.S. 136 and spent memorable summers at Minisink Camp. Even at camp, Judith was a fashionista. Her sense of style evolved from her mother. Norma, who worked as a domestic but was a seamstress by trade. Judith also was influenced by the movies that she immersed herself in. Oh, did Judith love movies! She knew the dialogue from all of her favorites, and channeled Bette Davis even into her adult life.

Judith had stars in her eyes and she had talent. As a teenager, she brought her beautiful mezzo-soprano voice to Harlem’s Crucifixion Church and eventually auditioned for, and sang with, the Riverside Church choir. Judith also was an adept pianist, and played with her Washington Irving H.S. band. Although she played and sang, she didn’t truly acquire a love of music until she entered Julliard, where she merged skill and passion.

Her focus shifted in 1955 when she married Isaiah Wiggs, and Judith put her time and energy into her family. From that union Michele and Rainier Wiggs were born. With children came responsibility and the music career that Judith seemed destined for was put on the back burner. She went to work for National Maritime Union as a keypunch operator. She took that skill to IBM and after keypunching became obsolete, Judith became an executive administrative assistant until retirement ended her thirty-year career. For most people that would have been sufficient. But not Judy. She followed her lifelong passion of fashion with a second career by joining the Saks team, and for the next ten years sold fashion jewelry. After Saks, Judith shared her expertise with Bloomies and remained there for two years until 2010.

Judith was so much more than her work history. She attacked life with fierce passion and a sense of devotion. Loyalty was her watchword. If you were her friend, you were her friend forever—if she liked you. She was certain about it all. She knew what she liked, she knew what she didn’t like. And if you didn’t agree—well, you just didn’t get it. She didn’t forget anything, and she could weave a story where each time there would be something a little different in the telling. But that didn’t matter...because it was a good story. She understood color and people and how things blend. She had an eye for beauty. She was a protector of her family and she would go to the grave for them. She was a queen and a celebrity in her own right. So Bette Davis, move over—here she comes. Tighten your seat belts, it’s going to be a bumpy night!

Judith Wiggs leaves to mourn: a daughter, Michele; a son, Rainier; three grandchildren, Kristen, Courtney and Jordan; a great-grandson, Cidney; uncle Stanley Johnson, cousins, Norma Hunt, Esmond Hunt, Norman Hunt and Janet Phillips, and a host of friends and family. She will be sorely missed.

# Order of Service

Processional.....Clergy and Family

Musical Selection.....Ray Chew

Scriptures Reading

Old Testament - Psalms 23

New Testament - Thessalonians 4: 13-18

Musical Selection.....Alyson Williams

Prayer of Comfort.....Deacon Alfonso Garcia

Reflections/Acknowledgment.....Gina Chew Holman

Obituary.....Barbara Newman

Musical Selection.....Alyson Williams

Eulogy.....Rev. Dr. Calvin E. Owens

Benediction

Recessional

**Interment**

Mt. Hope Cemetery

Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

## Psalm 23

*The Lord is My Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the path of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

### Acknowledgements

*The family of **Judith Wiggs** wish to express their sincere thanks and appreciation for the many acts of kindness during this time of sorrow.*

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*Professional Service Entrusted To:*

**McCall's Bronxwood**

*Funeral Home, Inc.*

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