



Shirley F. Payne

August 12, 2019

Shirley F. Payne, 94, librarian and quiet champion of village life

NORTH KINGSTOWN. Shirley F. Payne, 94, a 56-year resident of North Kingstown and still a home-owner in the town, died in her sleep on August 12, at Brookdale-South Bay Manor, 1959 Kingstown Road, South Kingstown, where she lived for eight years.

She was the wife of the late Kenneth A. Payne. Born in Staten Island, N.Y., a daughter of the late Earl J. and Gertrude (Parsons) Frazier, she grew up in White Plains and Pleasantville New York. In high school she was editor of the school newspaper. A scholarship student, she attended Barnard College in New York City. She married Kenneth Adams Payne during World War II; he was in the Merchant Marine, a graduate of Kings Point, and an avid boat builder and sailor.

Arriving in North Kingstown in 1955, first in the village of Wickford, then for many years on Bissel Cove in the Hamilton, and finally on Poplar Point, Shirley Payne was a quiet, steadfast champion of village life. She liked the ordinary things of life to be near at hand, and preferably in walking distance. Shirley Payne was active in civic and historic associations in North Kingstown: St Paul's Church, docent at the Old Narragansett Church, Cocumscussoc Association, Gilbert Stuart Birthplace and Museum, Wickford Yacht Club, where with her husband, she was a founding member, the League of Women-Voters-West Bay (she made it a point to be well versed in the provision of the

Town's Home Rule Charter), the North Kingstown Women's Club, and the North Kingstown Senior Association. She was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

A graduate of the University of Rhode Island with degrees in English and library science, Mrs. Payne was a librarian at the North Kingstown Free Library for twenty years. As a librarian, she was keenly interested in providing the services the community wanted. She was a key part of the team that accomplished moving the library to its large, modern home on Boone Street and a leader in making the library's card catalog digital and its collection part of an inter-municipal system. After retiring as director of the North Kingstown Free Library in 1991, she continued as a volunteer for two decades in the Library's South County Room. She was a longtime member of the Friends of the North Kingstown Free Library.

She leaves three sons, Kenneth F. Payne of Richmond, Austin A. Payne of North Kingstown, and Jeffrey P. Payne of New Bern, North Carolina; 18 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren. She is survived by her brother, Peter Frazier of San Diego, California.

It was her explicit belief that she had enjoyed a good and happy life, she loved her family, her community, and her career.

A Memorial Service for her will be held Saturday, September 14, at 1:00 p.m. in St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 55 Main Street, Wickford. Donations in her memory may be made to the North Kingstown Free Library, South County Collection.

Tribute Wall

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“ So sorry. Just saw this. Mrs. Payne (I just could never call her Shirley) was such a wonderful and caring person. From her laugh to the twinkle in her eye (such a sense of humor) she embodied everything you'd want a human to be. I knew her from at least first grade onto adulthood where she inspired me and helped me become a librarian and hopefully a better person. She will be missed, but ALWAYS be remembered fondly and with a smile. - charlie mcneil

Charlie - December 06, 2023 at 03:59 PM