

## *In Memoriam*

### Tribute to Marion Lee Stuart Cochran (1924 – 2017)

*by Deedy Bumgardner and Linda Holden  
The Augusta Garden Club*

**M**arion Lee Stuart Cochran has her name carved in the Garden Club of Virginia, in numerous institutions and organizations across the Commonwealth of Virginia, and in our hearts. The remembrance of Lee serves as a reminder to us that all things are possible through strength, perseverance, generosity and a unique combination of innovative thinking and enthusiasm. For over 60 years Lee was a distinguished member of the Augusta Garden Club, having served as its president and in most leadership roles. With her mentor and dear friend Mrs. McKeldon Smith (Emily), she shared the love of the garden club and also became a driving force in community development and preservation. Her passion for AGC and its mission left a strong legacy for the club to enjoy and perpetuate.



Lee Cochran served as president of the Garden Club of Virginia from 1972–1974. It was during the summer of 1972 that the GCV moved into the Kent-Valentine House and for the first time had an actual headquarters. Another major accomplishment under Lee's leadership was the role the GCV played in a long and hard fight to “Save Capitol Square” and prevent from going forward the plan for the Capitol building to be enlarged underground. She was awarded the Massie Medal in 1980 for her lasting devotion to, and willingness to serve, the GCV.

Lee was a respected member of many organizations and their boards, including University of Virginia Board of Visitors, Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Jamestown-Yorktown Commission, her alma mater, Hollins University, and the Garden Club of America. In Staunton, she served on the boards of the Museum of American Frontier Culture, American Shakespeare Center, Woodrow Wilson Birthplace, Stuart Hall and Mary Baldwin College. She served numerous other organizations and was a moving force, especially in fundraising efforts to preserve important gardens, historic sites and cultural and educational institutions. She gave advice with authenticity and was very gracious and humble about her contributions. Her dedication to Trinity Church in Staunton will also be long remembered. Lee and her husband, George, received the 1995 Outstanding Virginian Award, becoming the first couple so honored, in recognition of their outstanding service to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Lee had an incredible sense of humor, a hearty laugh, and was a lively and entertaining social guest and hostess. She loved Stuart House, the beautiful, historic Cochran home in Staunton, and graciously shared it. She loved her sons Moffett and Stuart and her two daughters-in-law. She was immensely proud of her grandchildren and great-granddaughters, who all called her “Lee Lee.” Most of all, Lee adored George, the love of her life.

This special woman possessed a sharp mind, a keen wit, a strong heart and an amazing amount of energy and foresight. We are indeed grateful for her life. She opened our eyes, our ears, our minds and surely our hearts. The legacy of Marion Lee Stuart Cochran will long live with us, her community and her state. ❁

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### **Betty Gwaltney Schutte GCV President 1996-98**

*by Jeanette Cadwallender  
The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club*

**T**he daffodils were in bloom at Betty Schutte's home, Huntingdon, where guests gathered following a celebration of her life at First Presbyterian Church, Winchester. Her grace and charm were such that all in her circle were, like her flower garden, cultivated to be their best. Betty's legacy of fun, faith, family and community service were evident in the garden she so lovingly tended.



A member of Winchester-Clarke Garden Club, Betty remained an active member until just a few years ago when she was accepted into Honorary Membership. In 1988, she served the Garden Club of Virginia as parliamentarian, the first of many offices she held for the state club. While president, she instituted a special committee for GCV interclub email – how visionary! Her support of online communications helped promote the club and Historic Garden Week to a larger audience. Her talents and interests lead her to remain active with the GCV for many years following her presidency on committees including Restoration, Investment, Long-Range Planning and Nominations. She received the Massie Medal for Distinguished Achievement in 2005.

Her passion for preservation included work on projects in Clarke County, Belle Grove Plantation and Blandy Experimental Farm. When the General Assembly established the Capitol Square Preservation Council in 1999, Betty was its first chairman.

In 2000, she oversaw publication of *1930 Garden Club Pilgrimage to Virginia*, a delightful account of five women from Pennsylvania who enthusiastically toured Virginia during the second year of Historic Garden Week.

Betty is survived by her husband, Charles, sister Nancy Dennis, two sons Chip and John, their wives and five grandchildren of whom she was exceedingly proud. Her daughter, Elizabeth Dean, preceded her in death. ❀