



Christine Maxwell Davis

December 7, 1925 - March 12, 2025

Christine Maxwell Davis, born December 7, 1925, peacefully entered eternal rest on Wednesday, March 12, 2025. A native of Portsmouth, VA, she was preceded in death by her mother, Jessie Maxwell; father, David O'Dennis Maxwell; husbands, John Lofton and Alexander Davis Sr.; sister, Margaret Blacken; brother, Lawrence Maxwell; grandparents, Bishop Samuel Mackey and Roselia Mackey; daughters, Constance Parks, Joan Roberts, Veronica Rucker, and Margaret Manley; son, John R. Lofton Jr.; grandson, George Smith; and great-granddaughter, Precious Smith.

A product of Portsmouth Public Schools, she was a 1943 graduate of I.C. Norcom High School. She pursued further studies in piano and organ at New York University, religious studies at Virginia Union University, and voice under Jerene Macklin of Detroit, Michigan. Christine sang with the Negro Opera Company, and her first music training began with Professor Hiram Simmons at his music school. She studied piano, organ, and voice under him, benefiting from his compositions of over 150 hymns and anthems for churches. By the age of 13, she was playing and accompanying a group on the radio each Sunday.

Christine was also associated with the Detroit Opera Company, performing in Windsor, Canada. Upon returning to Portsmouth, she developed a deep love for opera and drama, which led her to organize the Virginia Opera Guild. One

of her greatest achievements was her musical opera drama, Let My People Go, which was performed over 100 times. Her next passion was serving as organist and choir director for numerous churches in Hampton Roads, as well as in Michigan and California. Christine founded her own music school, where she taught over 50 students in piano, voice, and organ.

She accepted Christ at an early age in her grandfather's church. Christine was also a teacher in the Portsmouth Public School System.

Over the years, she organized numerous programs, including:

- The Portsmouth Unity Choir
- The Hiram Simmons Chorale Ensemble
- The Youth Unity Choir
- The Emancipation Celebration and the Gospelrama, which ran for over 35 years

Christine performed on national television and had a weekly radio program on WKGM Smithfield, where she played the pipe organ. She taught church music for the United Christian Bible Institute and established her non-profit organization, H.O.P.S. (Helping Others Progress Successfully, Inc.).

For 35 years, she was a member and organist at Park View United Methodist Church, where she was the first African American organist. She later joined Ebenezer Baptist Church under the leadership of Dr. Leroy Hill Jr.. Christine was also a member of the African American Historical Society, Portsmouth Pan Players, and the Civic Chorale Society.

As a writer, she had a deep love for poetry. Her poem, A True Dream, won an International Library of Poetry Award. Christine's work and community contributions were recognized in Black Enterprise, Upscale, and New Choice magazines (1998). She is also mentioned in Dr. Lemuel Berry's book of Accomplished Musicians.

She will be remembered for her dedication to family, church, community, and friends.

Awards and Recognitions

Christine received numerous awards, including:

- NAACP
- Girls Inc.
- Negro History and Cultural Pluralism
- The State Tourist Corporation
- Zeta Phi Beta Inc.
- African American History Society
- Montagu Award from the City of Portsmouth
- The Young People's Guild
- The Jefferson Award

- L. Douglas Wilder Award
- Wesley Community Center
- The United States Postal Service (USPS)

Cherished Family and Loved Ones

Christine leaves to cherish her memory:

- Two sons: Rev. Alexander Davis Jr. (Corliss) and Lawrence C. Davis
- One nephew: Lawrence Maxwell
- One niece: Cecelia Christian
- Grandsons: Roderick and Cortrell Davis, James Hall, Omar Williams, Derek Williams, Rev. Hugo Morrison (Tanika), Kyser Siscoe (Avonna)
- Granddaughters: Veranda Davis, Yolanda Barrow (Cornelius), Kimberly Smith, Edith Burns, Ramona Smith, Dionne Roberts, Maria Mackey, Cheryl Smith (Michael) and Sierra Hill (Phillip)), Kia Siscoe (Clarence), Twe' Siscoe, and Ebonee Powell.
- Great-Grandchildren: To'Nee, Tamia, Jahniya, Jonel, Runel, LaShawnda, Alexandria, Zhamir, Deandre, Marcus, Jordan, Jasmine, LaShawn, Xaniah, Fierra, TyVeion, Nehemiah, Rahlo and Aria Davis
- A host of great-great-grandchildren, cousins, and friends

- Sons-in-law: Donnell Manley and Robert Parks
- Goddaughter: Terry Early (Bob)
- Caretakers: Antionette Franklin and Beverly Smalls
- Best friend: Carol Downing

Cemetery Details

Roosevelt Memorial Park

1101 Campostella Road
Chesapeake, Va

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 21. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

J.T. Fisher Funeral Services
1248 N. George Washington Hwy.
Chesapeake, VA 23323
(757) 487-3700
info@jtfisherfuneralservices.com
<https://www.jtfisherfuneralservices.com>

Service

MAR 22. 12:00 PM (ET)

Ebenezer Baptist Church
728 Effingham Street
Portsmouth, VA

Tribute Wall

RB

“ Ronald Mckinley Barnes lit a candle in memory of Christine Maxwell Davis



Ronald Mckinley Barnes - March 25, 2025 at 11:47 AM

SS

“ shirley stephenson lit a candle in memory of Christine Maxwell Davis



shirley stephenson - March 22, 2025 at 01:28 AM



“ 43 files added to the album Life Tributes



J. T. Fisher Funeral Services - March 20, 2025 at 09:08 PM

DK

“ *Dr. J. Leon Knight lit a candle in memory of Christine Maxwell Davis*



Dr. Dr. J. Leon Knight - March 19, 2025 at 01:03 PM

LS

“ *My the family continue to find comfort in knowing that your love one is ok now She is where She wants to be. In that mansion that God prepared for Her many years ago. She has fought a good fight and has kept the faith. I sang with Her when She led the Virginia Opera Guild...*



Leigh M. Burton, Sr. - March 18, 2025 at 01:22 PM

RE

My sympathy to the family of Mrs. Davis. She was mt piano teacher and I sang in many of her singing groups as a baritone soloist. She was a phenomenal person and musician. May our God richly bless her legacy.

Reginald A. Early - March 19, 2025 at 05:24 AM

DK

My condolences, prayers, and now songs of Praise are extended to the family of Mrs. Christine Maxwell Davis, a human phenomena of unmeasured Performing Artistry. She was my first pipe organ teacher and organist at the Historic Mount Hermon Baptist Temple Church, Portsmouth, Virginia. I was eight years old admiring every Sunday her sitting at the organ just before worship service playing the Pipe Organ prelude and our amazing Senior Choir singing. Great anthems, spirituals, hymns, and yes, even operatic renditions proclaimed her expansive sacred talent during worship service. Mrs. Davis and my mom, Mrs. Adell Virginia Savage Knight chatted about my first, natural talent and upcoming future study of academics in the Performing Arts in junior and high school. Between she and Mr. Melvin N. Lewis, I. C. Norcom High School chorus director's music theory and techniques classes developed a strong foundation to the foundation of my success today. Then, my Dad, Mr. Daniel Dennis Knight and Mom allowed Mrs. Davis to pick me up on the way to her weekly Virginia Opera Guild rehearsals in Norfolk. That musicological experience was astoundingly wonderful. Graduating from high school, off to undergraduate NSU, graduate, post graduate, and other post/post-graduate degree universities are credited to my parents, siblings, and extended family. However, I continue to give credit to Mrs. Davis who helped navigate my path. Mrs. Christine Maxwell Davis will always be remembered instrumentally for that as well. I am so glad that we chatted in her home on several occasions last Fall.

Dr. Dr. J. Leon Knight - March 19, 2025 at 12:59 PM