



BILLIE S WILLS

MAY 17, 1917 - NOV 13, 2016



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BILLIE S WILLS

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Wills, Billie, 99, resident of Coral Gables, Florida passed away peacefully at her home Sunday, November 13th. She was always an impeccably dressed, gracious lady and generous philanthropist. Her home was open to all and her hospitality unequalled. She credited her longevity and good health to her lifelong Mediterranean diet, which began each day with three cloves of fresh garlic and four roasted almonds, fresh fruit and vegetables, Spanakopita, baklava, and good lamb, of course.

Born Vassiliki J. Stathes in Washington, DC on May 17, 1917, she will rest forever in her beloved birthplace. Her parents, James and Cleopatra, were Greek immigrants whose contributions to the Greek community in the Nation's Capital are acclaimed to this day as the MidCity Crossroads Greek Village.

After graduating from DC Central High School, Billie earned numerous degrees from U.S. and international institutions including Middlebury College in Vermont and the University of Miami as well as institutes in Mexico and Peru. She used her language skills to promote international understanding and cultural appreciation. Before moving to South Florida, she worked for the United Nations and its predecessor, the League of Nations.

She was an educator at heart since childhood, working in the Greek cultural center her parents founded. Her fondest desire was to teach more than just a language. "Knowledge is power but civility, patriotism, and cultural refinement are equally important." She challenged students to develop every aspect of their personal gifts. For nearly four decades, Billie was a distinguished language arts teacher at Miami Senior High School where she also served for four years as the Student Activities Director. Miss Wills, as her students fondly called her, was a pioneer in ESOL education and one of the first to use mass media to enhance her students learning experiences. She ardently wanted them to share her love for books, classical music and the fine arts. She was an opera and drama patroness. She loved Nature and all of God's creatures, great and small.



Obituary

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Billie was grateful for her longtime companions and care givers:

Silvia, Maria, Jocelyn, Dilcia, Mervin and her two beloved cats, Pepi and Piper. Those closest to Billie Wills are indeed grateful to Catholic Hospice for providing care and comfort during her final illness.

A visitation will be on Monday, 11-28-2016 from 7:00pm – 9:00pm with a service at 7:30 pm at Van Orsdel Coral Gables Chapel. Family and friends are welcome to come to pray, give tribute, and partake as family ala Greek tradition. Washington DC services and burial will follow at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations to be made in her name to the Billie S. Wills Scholarship Fund for inhancement of cultural arts. All checks to be made to: MECA, 1450 NE 2nd Avenue, Suite 352, Miami, FL 33132.



Events


BILLIE S WILLS

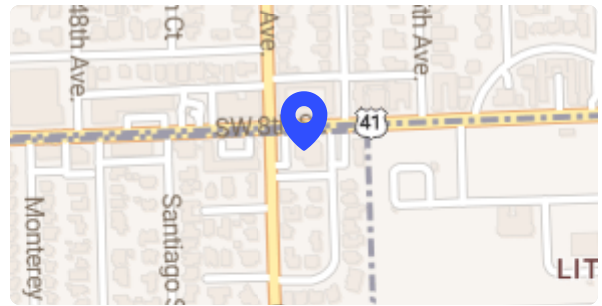
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Visitation


 **Monday**, November 28, 2016

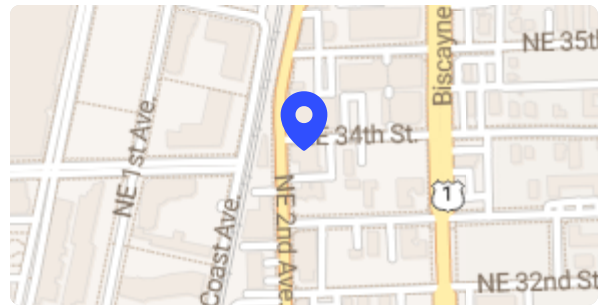
 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM ET

 **Van Orsdel Funeral & Cremation Services**
4600 SW 8th St, Coral Gables FL 33134



Cemetery Details

 **Van Orsdel Crematory**
3333 NE 2nd Avenue, Miami FL 33137





Tribute Wall

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Van Orsdel Funeral & Cremation Services shared a **Tribute Video**.



November 25 at 10:42 AM



Van Orsdel Funeral & Cremation Services shared an album called **LifeTributes**.



November 25 at 10:11 AM



Media

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Van Orsdel Funeral & Cremation Services shared a **Tribute Video**. November 25 at 10:42 AM

TRIBUTE VIDEO



SCAN TO WATCH



Van Orsdel Funeral & Cremation Services shared 27 photos to the LifeTributes album.

November 25 at 10:11 AM







Media

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Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring BILLIE by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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