



Shirley Bingham Thomas

July 22, 1932 - July 29, 2023

Shirley B. Thomas passed away peacefully in her home with loved ones by her side on July 29, 2023 at the age of 91. She was born July 22, 1932 in Bend, Oregon to Lillian Virginia and John Martin Bingham, the youngest in her family, with two older sisters, Joyce and Pat.

At a young age Shirley remembers being asked to perform folk songs in elementary school to her classmates. Thus began a lifelong love of singing. She also loved dance and participated in ballet, modern dance, drama and choir in her High School years. She attended Sacramento Junior College, her favorite class being A Cappella Choir and private voice lessons. One of the greatest joys in her life was singing professionally with her sisters, calling themselves the “Bingham Sisters”. They performed at various functions and on the radio. She then attended Brigham Young University, participating in a vocal performing group and touring with the school’s A Capella Choir.

She met David J Thomas, and they were married July 9, 1953. They began their family in Sacramento California and later moved to San Luis Obispo, California so her husband could attend Cal Poly for a degree In Architecture. Tragedy struck when her husband’s diabetic condition worsened, and he passed away. She was 29 years old with 6 children ages 1 to 8 years old. Her motto in life was “You can do hard things”, and that she did raising 6 young children on her own. She worked as a secretary and owned and managed a

room and board facility called "Poly Lodge" for Cal Poly students on Osos St. She latter purchased rental property in 1970 and managed those properties for 53 years.

During her years in San Luis Obispo, she continued her love of music, teaching guitar in adult night school, participated in Cuesta Master Chorale, solo vocalist for a community performance of the "Messiah", and vocal soloist for the dedicatory ceremony of Lopez Lake Dam. She was an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, serving in numerous positions; Music Director, Dance instructor, Chorister, and Music Chairman. She also served a mission in the Baton Rouge, Louisiana Mission. She led a rich and fulfilling life despite her hardships and was an example to many and dearly loved by her family.

Shirley is survived by her daughters Stacy L. Harris, Dana T. Robers, Drew Petrini, Kristie K. Thomas, and her sons Marc D. Thomas and Douglas J. Thomas, and 42 grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations can be to your favorite charity.