

# Memorial Service for Jean Chalmers at Adas Yoshuron

A memorial service for Jean Bunker Chalmers will be held on Saturday, October 1, at 3 p.m. at Adas Yoshuron Synagogue, 50 Willow Street, Rockland. The service will be led by Rabbi Susan Carvutto. All are welcome to honor the memory of Jean Chalmers, who was a beloved member of the Adas Yoshuron community.

*May her memory be a blessing.*

*Hamakom yenachem etchem b'toch she'ar aveilei Zionv'Yerushalayim. May God comfort you, together with all mourners of Zion and Jerusalem."*

Following is the obituary written by Jean's family.

**Jean Bunker Chalmers** died Monday, September 12, 2016, at 88 years old.

Jean was born October 20, 1927 in Madison, Wisconsin, where her father, William E. Chalmers, was in graduate school at the University of Wisconsin while also working as a union organizer for the UAW. Her mother was Ruth Vinton Chalmers, born in (then) Rangoon, Burma to Baptist missionaries. She met Bill Chalmers while at Pembroke College and Brown University. The family moved to Geneva, Switzerland in 1936 and spent three years there while Jean's father served in the International Labor Organizations delegation to the League of Nations. In 1939 they returned to Washington D.C., where her father was in the Dept. of Labor.

Jean attended Woodrow Wilson High School in D.C. and then earned her BFA at Rhode Island School of Design. While in graduate school in art at the University of Illinois, she converted to Judaism and married Joseph Schwarz, then moving to Ohio and on to Athens, Georgia in 1957. While in Georgia, Jean was active in the League of Women Voters, taught religious education at the Congregation Children of Israel, and worked for the Human Relations and Welfare board. From 1964 to 1965, she and her family lived in Florence, Italy. After they returned to Georgia, she attended the University of Georgia Law School, earning her LLB in 1968 in a class with only one other woman. The family moved to Richmond, Virginia where she practiced law at the law office of Corry & Corry. Then, after a divorce, Jean made her home in Rockland, Maine in 1972, a place she loved dearly, joining John Knight in his law practice and becoming his law partner in short order.

She was dedicated to community service. While in Rockland, Jean served on numerous boards and in various capacities with great energy and enthusiasm including as director of Habitat for Humanity, secretary of her synagogue, Adas Yoshuron, Director of Lincoln Street Center for the Arts, president of Mid-Coast Mental Health board, and director and founder of ParentWorks. She was elected to many positions locally and statewide, including serving as Mayor of Rockland and Maine State Senator in 1985-1986, as well as serving for many years on the Rockland City Council.

Jean was a champion of the interests of children in domestic disputes, and advocated tirelessly for the rights of battered women. She was honored by the Maine Bar Association with the Dana Award in 1989 for humanitarian work as a lawyer. It was a great honor for her when the governor of Maine marked January 13, 2007 as Jean Chalmers Day in gratitude for the legacy of service for her beloved state.

She relocated to Hanover, N.H. for her last years. She resided in Quail Hallow for many years, then was a resident in Hanover Terrace Nursing Home for two years, where she received professional and compassionate care. A week before she died, she commented to a nurses aide Its people like you that make this such a good place. She remained generous of spirit to the end.

Jean leaves a large family of four children and seven grandchildren who loved her greatly and will always remember her: David Bard Schwarz, his wife Ania Bard of Denton, Texas, and grandson Jakob Schwarz of Dallas, Texas; Dina Schwarz Fisher, her husband Tim Fisher of Hartford, Connecticut, and granddaughter Avital Wenger of Washington, D.C. and grandson Etan Wenger of Los Angeles, California; Jonathan Schwarz and his partner Victoria Skydancer of San Diego, California; and Adam Schwarz, his wife Gail Rickards of Hanover, N.H. and grandchildren Maxwell, Samuel, Lois, and Diana Rickards Schwarz. She is also survived and will be sorely missed by her brother Douglas Chalmers and his wife Janet Chalmers of New York, N.Y.; her sister Meg Chalmers and her wife Judy Young of Fort Meyers, Florida; and her sister Tiela Chalmers and partner Nancy Stewart of San Francisco, California.

Contributions in her honor can be made to ParentWorks, c/o Home Counselors, Inc., 375 Main Street, Rockland, Maine 04841.

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