



## Claire Jackson Fitton

April 22, 2014

Claire Jackson Fitton a member of the Hamilton community since 1952, died peacefully on Tuesday, April 22, 2014. She was 86 years old. Mrs. Fitton was admired and will be remembered for the great energy and abundance of talents that she brought to her new hometown. Emily Claire Jackson was born and grew up in West Point, Georgia. She attended Shorter College, declaring several other majors before settling in her junior year on piano performance. When her parents offered her the gift of either a car or graduate school, she chose graduate school and went to study dance in New York, where she was very proud of her associations with Louis Horst and Martha Graham. After earning a Master of Arts degree at New York University, she accepted a teaching position at Ohio University, where she met her future husband, Donald Webb Fitton, Jr., of Hamilton. Their shared interest in music and especially in vocal harmony was the foundation of their marriage; their first purchase together was the piano that both of them played all their lives. Mrs. Fitton gave a number of captivating and memorable performances in productions of Greater Hamilton Civic Theatre and Rotary Revels. Among her roles: Gladys in *The Pajama Game*, performing "Steam Heat"; Rose Alvarez in *Bye Bye Birdie*, which she also choreographed; Pirate Jenny in *The Threepenny Opera*, Miami University Summer Theatre's inaugural production; Corie's mother in *Barefoot in the Park*; and Joanne in *Company*. She directed a number of plays, including *The Women*; *The Fantasticks*, which was GHCT's first musical; the first amateur production of *The Apple Tree*; *You're a*

Good Man, Charlie Brown; and Oh, Coward! She took classes in theatre at Miami University, went on to earn a second master's degree, and was on the faculty at Miami University Hamilton during its first four years. She loved teaching and advising students. Mrs. Fitton was an accomplished and effective leader in many arts and civic associations in Hamilton, including GHCT, the Hamilton Fairfield Arts Council, the League of Women Voters, Planned Parenthood, and the Hamilton Garden Club. She enjoyed membership in the P.E.O. Sisterhood. Mr. and Mrs. Fitton together were generous supporters of many organizations in Hamilton and elsewhere, including the Fitton Center for the Arts, Hamilton Community Foundation, the First United Methodist Church, and their colleges. Mrs. Fitton's family includes four children and their families: Emily Fuhrman of Hamilton, her husband Jim, and their children Jamie (with husband Joe Binegar) and Cy; Nancy Vaden Fitton of Alexandria, Virginia, and her partner Ginger Swope; Donald Webb Fitton III of Greenville, South Carolina, his wife Roberta, and their children Camilla (with husband Travis Bakos), Victoria, and Don; and Travis Kinch of Hamilton, who died in 2012, her husband Greg, and their daughters Sinclair, Hannah, and Georgia. Mrs. Fitton had wide circles of friends in Hamilton, Michigan, and Florida. Mrs. Fitton's children thank all of those at Berkeley Square and Hospice of Southwestern Ohio who cared so well for our mother. Nancy and Webb are profoundly grateful to our sisters and brothers-in-law for their constant devotion to both our parents' care. The family will receive friends on Thursday, May 1, 2014 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Weigel Funeral Home, 980 N. W. Washington Blvd. A memorial service will be held on Friday, May 2, 2014 at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, Second and Ludlow Streets. The Rev. Dr. Peggy Garrison will officiate. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Hamilton Community Foundation at 319 N. Third St., Hamilton, Ohio 45011.