



## Shirley Ellen Richards

September 18, 1935 - May 25, 2022

Shirley Ellen (Shields) Richards was born in Laconia, Indiana, to Robert and Helen (Langdon) Shields, September 18, 1935. Unfortunately, she lost her dad in 1949. Her youth was spent in Laconia, Edinburgh, and (mostly) in Martinsville.

She met Jim Richards, and married him at the tender age of 18, moved to Columbus, and they soon had two sons. She loved music, and was a skilled pianist, so in her spare time she offered piano lessons. She also loved books and bulldogs. Shirley and Jim became active members of the First Christian Church (FCC) of Columbus, which played a pivotal role in her life.

Although Jim had earned a college degree, their family forestalled higher education for Shirley. But while raising children, she started attending Indiana University. She not only graduated, she obtained a Master's degree, and became a high school teacher— first at Columbus High School, then at Columbus East.

She was a very popular English teacher, and also led cheerleading squads. And she was an innovator. In the early 1980s she sought and won funding to create a computer lab at East Columbus High, its very first.

Across the years of her life she never lost her love of music. That, in fact, was the driver that led she and Jim to join Barney and Marilu Carr in establishing and providing initial funding for a music fund at the FCC.

Another of Shirley's passions — beyond her scores of friends — was books. She was an admitted book hoarder. That devotion to books and a related love of reading were part of what her students inherited from her.

Her greatest passions, though, were her family. Jim had lost use of his legs through polio before he met her, so Shirley's life largely encompassed being not only his partner, but also his constant helper. This she did without complaint.

Shirley is survived by her sister, Sharon Bolin, her brother, Robert Shields, as well as her sons, Jef and Mark, Mark's wife Shawn, her grandchildren (Connor, Jake, Maggie, and Kyle), her granddaughter-in-law, Annie Sturges Richards, along with her sister-in-law and her husband, Janice and Steve Abel.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the First Christian Church Music Fund, 531 5th Street, Columbus, IN 47201.

Services will be Saturday, June 25, at the First Christian Church in Columbus with Steve Yeaton officiating. Funeral will be held at 1:00, with viewing beginning at 11:00 am. Shirley will be laid to rest beside her husband at Garland Brook Cemetery.

Arrangements were entrusted to Jewell-Rittman Family Funeral Home.

# Cemetery Details

## Garland Brook Cemetery

501 N Gladstone  
Columbus, IN

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN **25**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

First Christian Church  
531 5th St.  
Columbus, IN 47201

## Funeral

JUN **25**. 1:00 PM (ET)

First Christian Church  
531 5th St.  
Columbus, IN 47201

# Tribute Wall



“ *Jewell-Rittman Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Shirley Ellen Richards*



Jewell-Rittman Funeral Home - June 20 at 02:19 PM

LD

“ *The Joe Daily family spent many years sitting behind the Richards family at FCC As a young child, I admired his Jim would stand for most songs and Shirley was his constant companion. There were a testament to a loving marriage.*

Laura Daily - June 15 at 11:06 PM

RW

“ *Roberta Wilson lit a candle in memory of Shirley Ellen Richards*



roberta wilson - June 13 at 11:06 AM