



## Shirley T. Bernstein

March 1, 1923 - April 21, 2020

### SHIRLEY TENNENBAUM BERNSTEIN

CINCINNATI – Shirley T. Bernstein, age 97, died peacefully on Tuesday, April 21, 2020, wife of the late Benjamin Bernstein, mother of Linda (Mark) Peroff, Jimmy (Barbara) Bernstein and Alan (Mary) Bernstein, sister of the late Stanley Tennenbaum, grandmother of Bryan and Michael Peroff, Rob, Brad and Amy Bernstein, Terri and Benjamin Bernstein and the late David Peroff, also survived by 8 great grandchildren. Shirley was born in Cincinnati and became a lifelong contributor to the community. She grew up in North Avondale and raised her family in Bond Hill. After returning from Ecuador while accompanying her late husband, who was on assignment with the U.S. Agency for International Development and Peace Corps, she and Ben lived out their remaining years in Hyde Park. She graduated from Walnut Hills High School and received her college degree from the University of Cincinnati. Shirley was Ben's partner in developing their many restaurant ventures in Cincinnati. She and Ben developed their first restaurant, El Greco in Southgate, KY and then went on to develop Mike Fink, Crockett's River Café, and Covington Landing, floating on the Ohio River. The two of them became known as that extraordinary couple that spurred the restaurant developments along the downtown stretch of the Ohio River. She and Ben also developed BB Riverboats excursion boat operation which has grown to become a Cincinnati icon for residents, tourists, and conventioners. The business has been passed on to the next generation of Bernstein's and is now under the

direction of her son, Alan, and grandchildren, Terri and Ben. She and Ben continued on to create two innovative restaurants in downtown Cincinnati, Benjamin's and Shirley's Café. Shirley was always known for her infectious and dynamic personality and was said to be able to remember all of the customer's names she came into contact with at the restaurants. She was a truly genuine individual that was at times very opinionated and outspoken but loved and respected by everyone. She made a lasting impression on everyone she met and interacted with. All of her acquaintances retell their favorite stories of their dealings with Shirley with humor and fondness. Private services held. Donations in Shirley's honor may be made to Hospice of Cincinnati, the SPCA of Cincinnati, or the Kentucky Restaurant Association.

# Tribute Wall

MR

“ I worked for Ben & Shirley for 8 years at several of their restaurants, include Shirley's, Benjamin's and the Mike Fink. The Bernsteins were an ideal family to work for. When I went back to college, they accommodated my school schedule while allowing me to keep my company-paid health insurance. Shirley was compassionate, generous and extremely kind. And sometimes, a real hoot! One (of many) funny stories: One night while bartending at Benjamin's, a dining room customer came to the bar to alert me to a woman roaming the dining room, wearing a lobster apron, while eating a pork chop. As she walked by their table, she discarded the pork chop bone on one of their butter plates. The customer was confused and dismayed. I told them it was Shirley Bernstein (of whom they had heard about), and all was forgiven. Sadly, I haven't spoken to Shirley for several years. Cincinnati has lost an icon. A truly fine lady.

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**Matthew Rost** - April 24, 2020 at 08:11 AM