



Diana Thayer Watlington

April 5, 1951 - April 16, 2023

Kittery, ME - Diana Thayer Watlington, of Kittery, ME, died at Portsmouth Regional Hospital on Sunday, April 16th. She was born in Hamilton, Bermuda in 1951, daughter of Rosalind Garges Watlington and Francis “Frank” William Harrison Watlington. Baptized in the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity, she grew up in Pembroke, Bermuda, attending the Bermuda High School for Girls, and later the Wyoming Seminary College Preparatory School in Kingston, Pennsylvania.

Diana pursued her undergraduate studies at Ithaca College where she first majored in Music, later graduating with a BA in Studio Art. She furthered her visual art studies at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and later the Maine College of Art.

In 1972, Diana married Theodore Allen Ruetenik, and they made their home in West Concord, MA, where they raised two children, Kerry and Daniel, eventually moving to Cambridge, MA in 1996. Diana shared her love for art and music with her children, and her home was filled with the sounds of piano, flute, guitar, and singing, and her paintings covered the walls.

Diana exhibited her art in many local galleries and was a founding member of the Umbrella Arts Center in Concord, MA, where she taught art classes and maintained a studio. She sold her prints, greeting cards, and original coloring

books throughout Bermuda.

Diana was an active volunteer and contributor to the Concord Public Schools, the FolkTree concert series, and the Dance Complex in Central Square, Cambridge. She was also a prolific songwriter and member of the Cambridge folk music scene, performing at open mics and coffee houses around the Boston Area.

Diana had a restless spirit and her love of travel took her to locations across the United States. She spent long stretches of time in Albuquerque, NM, San Diego, CA, Portland, ME, and Old Orchard Beach, ME. A dedicated journal writer, she filled hundreds of notebooks with sketches, thoughts, and observations from her travels.

In Diana's later years, she was increasingly devoted to her Christian faith, and was a familiar figure at church services and bible readings from Portsmouth, NH to Portland, ME, including the Cathedral Church of St. Luke. She donated to scores of religious charities and educational programs nationwide, and she often looked forward to reading about the success of their programs in monthly newsletters and annual missives.

In the last year of her life, Diana resided at Holiday Kittery Estates, where she enjoyed long walks into town and lively conversations with many of the residents. Diana is survived by her brother, Bill "Byron" Watlington, daughter, Kerry Abukhalaf, son, Daniel Ruetenik, and grandson, Mazen Abukhalaf.

She will be laid to rest in a private burial at St. Paul Cemetery in Arlington, MA. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a memorial donation to Preble Street in Portland, ME.

Online: <https://www.preblestreet.org/>

Or by mail: Preble Street, 55 Portland Street Portland, ME 04101

You can view a video of Diana performing folk music, circa 1993, here:
https://youtu.be/BrTeoiE_XUU

Tribute Wall

KE

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



KerryA - May 07, 2023 at 09:05 PM

AS

“ I had the privilege of meeting Diana one day in Old Orchard Beach. It was always so nice to talk with her. She was so full of love for her fellow beings, and just a truly wonderful person. I looked forward to seeing her every off season in Maine, when she would camp out at an off season rental. I had been thinking of her for so long, but I lost touch and did not know where she was until today when, by chance, I saw her obituary. I had no idea that she was ill or passed away. I am very sorry to her family and the many, many friends and acquaintances she met over the years. Diana never knew how she touched lives. Everywhere she went, she had friends who waited to see her. She was quiet, unassuming and peaceful, yet always full of fun stories that would have me smiling and laughing. She talked about her art work and many subjects. She was so knowledgeable on so many topics and it was a pleasure to listen to her. It seems I always ran in to Diana somewhere in town, the library, the store or post office, and we saw each other at the community dinners. Diana loved to speak of her faith and we had many conversations about God. She said she was so grateful to Jesus for coming into her heart and her life. I missed her when I did not where she was here on earth for the past couple of years. I still cannot believe she has passed, and although I will miss her even more now, I know she is with her Heavenly Father and all brand new. Heaven got a gem. Thanks for all the joy you brought to the earth Diana. I will miss you.

Annemarie Serrecchia - May 03, 2023 at 05:37 PM

KE

Thank you so much, Annemarie, for sharing your sweet memories of Diana. It was so kind of you to take the time to write this message. --
from Diana's family

KerryA - May 07, 2023 at 08:56 PM

BB

Wow ABAMARIE..THIS IS A WONDERFUL LETTER...❤️❤�
Sincerely..DIANA'S BROTHER BILLY BURON WATLINGTON. PH 508
649 2719... 30 CHURCHILL AVE..CAMBRIDGE MA 02104

Billy Byron - April 17, 2025 at 03:18 PM

BS

Dear ANNEMARIE...❤️🙏CONTACT ME AT ANY TIME UP TO 10PM
❤️🙏

Billy Byron UTUBE MUSIC PRODUCER SEUTUBE - April 17, 2025 at 03:23 PM

FA

“ Diana often came to The Salvation Army in Old Orchard and I wish I knew her better. Her conversations were always lively and interesting. Sorry to hear of her passing. Have missed seeing her from time to time. My condolences to her family and friends.

faith anderson - May 01, 2023 at 11:19 AM

KE

Thank you, Faith, for your condolence message. She often spoke of her visits to the Old Orchard Salvation Army. Wishing you all the best from Diana's family...

KerryA - May 07, 2023 at 09:07 PM

BB

I am too sad to write a thing ..I miss DIANA so much. Thank you for condolences and may. Jesus walk beside you as he does me iny retirement home. I am Diana's brother BILLY BYRON..UTUBE COMPOSER.🎹🌸🙏🙏❤️

Billy Byron - June 02, 2025 at 09:48 PM

SC

“ I never had the privilege of meeting Diana, I only know of her from her obituary. Apparently, she lived a full and productive life. I was just thinking how interesting it must have been talking with her. I saw a you tube video of her singing in her younger days. Pretty lady with a lovely voice. Very talented. My condolences to Diana's family and friends.



Sandra Charron - April 30, 2023 at 01:50 PM

KE

So kind of you to write this message, Sandra. All the best to you from Diana's family...

KerryA - May 07, 2023 at 09:09 PM

VK

“ Diana use to come to our church services at St. Augustine Anglican Church service in Scarborough on occasion but she especially enjoyed Bible Study and coffee hour. She would just drop in when she could and was always welcomed. Having gone to high school and college in Ithaca, we had much to share. She was always had interesting stories to tell and interesting perspectives on religion and worship.



I was very surprised to see her notice today in the newspaper. I want to extend my sympathy and sincere condolences to the family.

Valerie Kazarian - April 29, 2023 at 03:27 AM

KE

So nice to hear you knew her, Valerie. Thank you for welcoming her to your services. Sending good wishes to you from Diana's family...

KerryA - May 07, 2023 at 09:11 PM

GR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



George Ruetenik - April 23, 2023 at 09:22 AM

GR

Kerry & Diana from the late 70's.

George Ruetenik - April 23, 2023 at 09:29 AM

KE

Thanks for sharing this great pic, George! So grateful...

KerryA - May 09, 2023 at 03:05 PM