

NEWS

# Voice teacher trained generations of singers

By **REDLANDS DAILY FACTS**

December 19, 2007 at 12:00 a.m.

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Gwendolyn Roberts, who studied at Juilliard and sang professionally in Hollywood, returned to San Bernardino to teach, helping develop the careers of many singers. She also helped found the Western Region of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Gwendolyn Roberts, a prominent local voice teacher and supporter of musical arts organizations, died of heart failure Dec. 11 at Braswell's Colonial Care in Redlands. She was 96.

She was born Feb. 9, 1911, in Lexington, Neb., to Andrew and Florence Roberts and moved with her family to San Bernardino when she was young.

After graduating from San Bernardino High School and San Bernardino Valley College, she studied voice at the University of Southern California, Juilliard and Columbia.

Her voice teachers included Maggie Teyte and Ruth and Mario Chamlee of the Metropolitan Opera.

She sang professionally in Hollywood for 10 years, and presented many concerts and recitals locally. For eight years, she performed at the Hollywood Bowl, and she toured California, performing in operas, musicals, concerts and recitals.

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In 1956, along with Ruth Chamlee, she helped found the Western Region of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She was the district director for the Riverside/San Bernardino District for 50 years.

She was a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and served as president of the local Los Angeles chapter. She also served as regional governor and national vice president of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Foundation.

She was a founder, two-time president and lifelong board member of the San Bernardino Valley Concert Association and was a lifelong member of the First Presbyterian Church of San Bernardino.

She was a member of many civic and professional organizations, a few of which include: San Bernardino City Fine Arts Commission, member for 20 years; San Bernardino Zonta Club International, president and a 50-year member; San Bernardino branch of the Music Teachers' Association of California, president and treasurer; Riverside Opera Guild, executive board member and program chairman; The Spinet music club of Redlands; the Dominant Club of Los Angeles; Gate City Chapter 75 of the Order of Eastern Star, worthy matron in 1986; Order of White Shrine; Order of Amaranth.

Survivors include her cousin James Roberts of Lexington, Neb., and many friends and young singers whose lives she touched.

Visitation is 4 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 19, and a service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 20, both at Bobbitt Memorial Chapel, 1299 E. Highland Ave., San Bernardino.

Memorial donations may be made to a scholarship fund for young singers. Checks should be made to Met. Opera Nat'l. Council (MONC) and sent to PO Box 3543, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

Condolences may be sent on-line at [www.bobbittchapel.com](http://www.bobbittchapel.com).