

Beneth Peters Jones

July 19, 1937 Feb. 2, 2019

Beneth Jones knew how to act. Part of the Classic Players for more than 50 years, Mrs. Jones directed or acted in 24 Shakespearean productions and one Living Gallery at BJU. Her first major role was playing Lady Roxane in Cyrano de Bergerac as a sophomore. Not only did Mrs. Jones win the role, but she won the affection of Dr. Bob Jones III, who was playing Christian. Dr. Lonnie Polson, chair of the Division of Communication at BJU, said that her performance as Queen Margaret in Richard III was not only her last but also her best.

Despite the high stress of directing and acting, Mrs. Jones handled the duties with grace. Polson said, "The pressures of directing or acting in a major theatrical production bring out the best and the worst of those who participate. But in the case of Beneth Peters Jones, there was not a worst—only a best." Mrs. Jones was confident enough in her directing ability to bring on young, untried actors and give them a shot—one of those actors being Polson himself. For many alumni, Mrs. Jones was more than the "First Lady" at BJU; she was the face of dozens of 16th-century characters come to life.

"What a very sweet testimony of a life lived wholly and consistently for our Savior."

Susan Simpson (1981 grad)



"She [was] a gifted speaker and an eloquent writer, but her greatest gift to everyone she met—including me—was her kindness."

Trisha White Priebe (2003 grad)

"If you knew Mrs. Jones, you knew she prayed daily for the University and its students. For 58 years, she served, taught and encouraged students at BJU. As a student body, we acknowledge and appreciate the continuous support Mrs. Jones has shown to us."

Student Leadership Council

Mrs. Jones' impact on BJU students was felt just as strongly in the classroom. Mrs. Jones taught BJU speech classes for 13 years and a class for ministers' wives for 15 years. She also emphasized the importance of etiquette as a part of our Christian testimonies. Kathleen Oloffo, a 1989 BJU grad, said, "Today I was teaching my students how to hold their silverware with a giant fork & knife and thought of Mrs. Jones. We all owe so much to her & her commitment to shape us into adults who were mannerly and gracious. What an example of grace and beauty!"

Through theatre and teaching, Mrs. Jones had an obvious impact on the campus of BJU, but her influence spread much farther than Greenville. From her first book Sunshine on the Soapsuds to her most recent Meeting Him, Mrs. Jones wrote 13 books over the course of her life. She also spoke at numerous conferences and meetings worldwide. Dedicated to doing her best, Mrs. Jones would tirelessly tweak and revise speeches to perfectly fit every circumstance and conference.



"I am so grateful for her ministry to me as a student at BJU and later as a struggling pastor's wife. She understood the struggles others face."

Janice Cox Cline (1981 grad)

