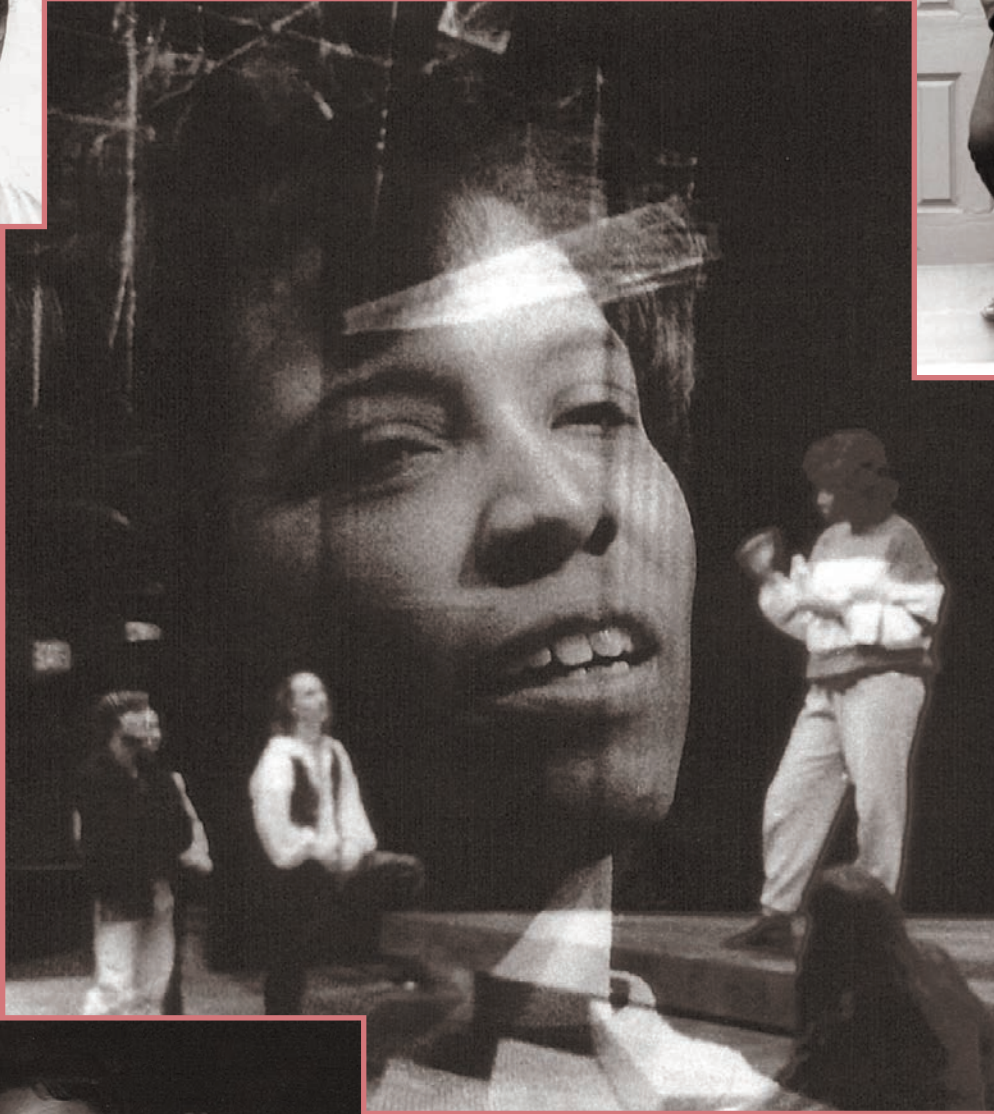


Being Grown Is
More Than A Notion



A Profile of
**Dr. Betty
Jean Jones**

B E T T Y J E A N J O N E S , P H . D .
1 9 4 9 - 1 9 9 7



1949
 Born December 11 in Albany, Georgia



1963-1967
 Monroe High School, Albany, Georgia



1967-1971
 B.A. in English and Drama, Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina



1971-1973
 Assistant to the Director, Public Information and Publications Department, Greensboro Public School System, Greensboro, NC

1973-1976
 Senior Writer for Public Relations Firm, B&C Associates, Inc., High Point, North Carolina

1976
 Acting Chairman, Drama Department, Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina

1976-1978
 M.F.A. in Directing, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

1976-1984
 Chairman, Drama Department, The Governor's School of North Carolina at Salem College, Winston-Salem

1978-1982
 Ph.D. in American Theatre and Drama, University of Wisconsin at Madison

1979-1982
 Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin at Madison, Department of Theatre and Drama



1982-1983
 Visiting Instructor, Department of Communication and Theatre, University of North Carolina at Greensboro



1983-1988
 Assistant Professor, Department of Communication and Theatre, University of North Carolina at Greensboro



1988
 Invited Scholar at International Eugene O'Neill Conferences:
 ■ Nanjing University, Nanjing, China
 ■ Nobel Symposium, Stockholm, Sweden
 ■ Belgian Luxembourg American Studies Association, Han-sur-Lesse, Belgium



1988-1994
 Associate Professor of Theatre in the Department of Communication and Theatre (tenured 1988); Director of Graduate Division; University of North Carolina at Greensboro



1993
 Guest Professor of Theatre, University of Nevada at Las Vegas

1994-1997
 Professor of Theatre, Department of Theatre and Drama, University of Michigan

1996-1997
 Associate Dean of Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan

1997
 Killed January 9 in the crash of Comair Flight 3272 in southeast Michigan

- Content: Anita Jones Roehrick
- Graphic Design: Rob Roehrick, Roehrick Design
- Quilt Design: Silas J. Jones

Cover photos of Betty (clockwise from upper left): Elementary school portrait, 1959; on the steps of Bennett College's Little Theatre, 1969; University of Michigan Theatre Dept. montage, 1997; and 47th birthday celebration with her sister, Anita, and niece, Miranda, San Francisco, 1996

(Reprinted from the University of Michigan Faculty Listing)

Betty J. Jones, Ph.D. (theatre studies, directing) is Associate Dean of the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies and Professor of Theatre. At the Rackham Graduate School she directs the Office of Fellowships and Recruitment, and she also addresses graduate study in the Arts and Humanities at the University. She is an internationally recognized specialist in the field of American Theatre and Drama. Her special interests include classic and contemporary American theatre, and American film studies. Both an artist and a scholar, she seeks in her work to combine theoretical and critical approaches to production and performance.

Documentation of her directing of major American dramas is collected in theatre archives in America and abroad. Ms. Jones is author of numerous published essays and was an invited panelist at noteworthy symposia in Belgium, China, Germany, and Sweden.

Ms. Jones is a founding member of the American Theatre and Drama Society and on the editorial board of Theatre Symposium.

She came to the University of Michigan in 1994. She was previously a member of the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and served as guest professor at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas.

Ms. Jones frequently addresses the Association for Theatre in Higher Education as well as regional theatre conferences; and she has been a panelist at a Modern Language Association national meeting.

She is frequently asked to respond as scholar/artist to the development of new American plays at major regional theatre companies including Actors' Theatre of Louisville, the Western Stage Company, and offerings at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

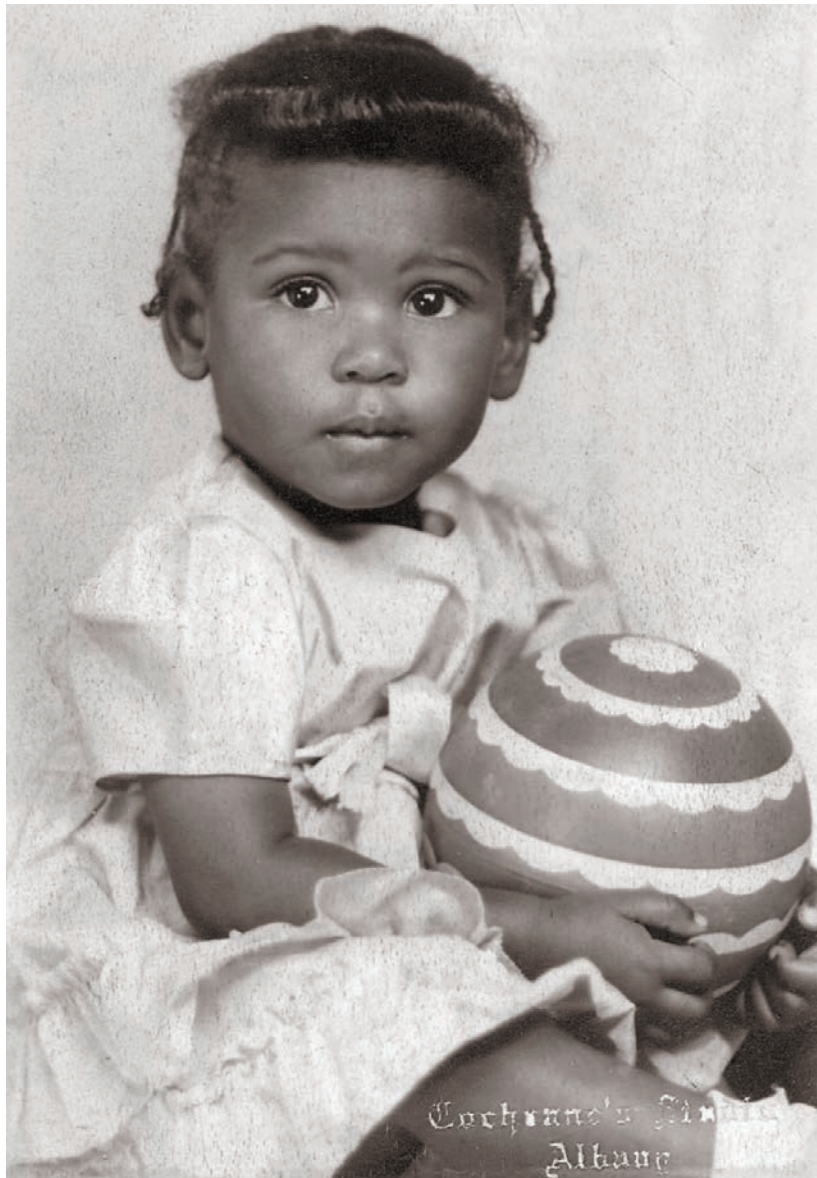
She holds three degrees in English and Drama: from the University of Wisconsin at Madison (Ph.D.), University of North Carolina at Greensboro (M.F.A.), and Bennett College (B.A.). ■



C H A R M I N G

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

*“Stay in the
process of Life;
don’t dropout,
it’s about
the journey,
not the
destination.”*
Betty J. Jones



Betty Jean Jones, two years old, 1951

Growing up on solid ground

By Anita Jones Roehrick,
Betty’s sister

Betty Jean Jones was raised in a house divided—by the Albany, Georgia *City Limit* sign. It was fitting because our childhoods were a mixture of fancy and plain, city and country.

Irene Gaines Jones, our mother, was a teacher and librarian and laid claim to the world outside our front door—the world of academics and the folk who populated Hazard Drive. Turn right at the sign and you were on the campus of Albany State College—the small Negro college where our mother earned her degree. Also on the campus, one house down from our house, was Hazard Laboratory School where Betty and I finished first through seventh grades. Turn left at the sign and you were among our rich mix of neighbors, a spectrum of African Americans; country folk living “in the city”.

A step out the back door took us into the world of chores and play time. Our father, Silas Jones, worked as a lard renderer for *Lykes Brothers*, a meat packing plant and was proprietor of a gas station. In his spare time he was

COMPASSIONATE

a hunter, fisherman and back-yard farmer. Our parents did not own the property at 325 Hazard Drive, but our father laid claim to the land when he planted sugar cane, corn, peas, okra and tomatoes; built a pen for his hunting dogs and a yard for chickens. There was a wood pile where he chopped fuel wood for our fireplaces.

Betty was our mother's first born and the third daughter born to our father. Our father's other daughters are Mildred Jones and Patricia Stewart. Mildred grew up with her mother in Cleveland, Ohio, spending summers with us in Georgia. Pat was not a part of our growing up years.



The Jones Family: Mr. & Mrs. Silas J. Jones, Betty Jean, and Anita Gail, Vada, GA, 1956.



From left: Betty Jean with her mother Mrs. Irene Gaines Jones, and her sister Anita Gail at home on Hazard Drive, Albany Georgia, 1963.

After my birth, our maternal grandmother, Arlena Hinson, moved in with the family to help while our mother worked. As she grew older, Betty took on more responsibilities around the house while continuing to live up to the high academic expectations our parents—and she—had set for herself.

Betty felt we were fortunate to grow up at a time when children were raised by caring communities. We had a strong foundation at home, at church and at school. Betty took on leadership roles in all three places: solid ground on which she practiced the lessons that shaped her into the phenomenal woman she came to be. ■



Betty Jean, right and Anita Gail center, 1956.

“Trouble don’t miss nobody—but don’t invite it in—it will come your way throughout your life.”

Betty J. Jones, quoting her grandmother, Arlena Hinson

“It’s called LIFE and life is not fair.”

Betty J. Jones, quoting her grandmother, Arlena Hinson

OLD SOUL

EARLY YEARS 1951–1963

“Grandmama Arlena Hinson said, ‘If you want the fair, it comes once a year—enjoy it when it comes; but until then it’s life—just deal with it.’”

Betty J. Jones



Elementary school portrait, 1959

Down home

By Anita Jones Roehrick

In reflecting on the love and care received from the adults who raised us, Betty’s long time friend, Edna Williams Stanback says, “It radiated out from family to teachers to the people at church. They were all concerned. It was a true village.”

“Always engage the beast; it’s a beauty of a challenge.”

Betty J. Jones

Our mother had four siblings and our father was the youngest of twenty-one so we were part of a large extended family; made even larger by hosts of friends. In addition to the many students she taught,



Accompanying her sister, Anita, on piano, 1962.

our mother took under her wing students from Albany State College. When they thanked her she’d say, “You don’t have to thank me. Someday, my girls will need help and I know that somebody will do for them what I do for you now.” Young Betty developed her gifts for collaboration and inclusiveness by following the example of Irene Jones who had learned it in turn from her mother, Arlena Hinson.

Young Betty soared in the challenges of her learning years, often leading church youth auxiliaries and school clubs. Ruby Hampton, her eighth grade teacher, is a Bennett College Alumni and the motivation behind Betty’s decision to attend Bennett. Her fledgling interest in theatre was nurtured at Monroe High in the Drama Club, lead by Mrs. Lee.

Young Betty flourished in the bosom of family. Our childhood

summers were spent in a place we called *down home*—Vada, Camilla and Bainbridge, Georgia—sixty miles from Albany where our mother had grown up. A brown paper grocery bag served as a suitcase as we were deposited with our mother’s younger sister, Curtis Louise



The Jones & Stovall families, 1966.

Florence and her husband, Uncle John, for summer days of simple pleasures—playing barefoot outside until dark, fishing, riding bikes on country roads, picking vegetables and wild berries.

It seems that the path of Betty’s learning years was custom designed to create the influential artist/scholar/teacher. ■

FIESTY

HIGH SCHOOL YEARS 1963-1967

Shores dimly seen

By Betty J. Jones, High School Graduation speech

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.’ These are the words of Apostle Paul, as written to the Corinthians in Chapter 13 and verse 12. They convey the significance of our theme: ‘Shores Dimly Seen.’

“Presently, as graduates, we see the future as a dream. It is viewed as if through a dark glass and it appears as a dim tomorrow or a distant shore. However, we are sure



With her mother, Irene, 1964.



Betty, fourth from the right, Student Library Assistants of Georgia, 1967

of one fact, and that is: The future is a reality and we must view it face-to-face.

“We live in stages of constant change, but our foresight into the future is not totally destroyed. Now, we can only see clearly the first part of our ‘tomorrows’—our hopes. However, when we fulfill these hopes we can see the full picture as we complete the second part—our accomplishments.

“As we live from day-to-day, we can recognize a brightening of the dark glass as the distant shores become closer. We can then see ourselves as others see us and know ourselves as others know us; for then we have reached that ‘shore’ and other ‘ships of progress’ are docked in the ‘sands of time.’ This progress can be seen clearly, as success in life for a full individual is being exemplified in Education, Citizenship and Religion. Developments in these areas of today, determine the success of tomorrow.” ■



Monroe High Graduation, 1967.

“Adulthood ain’t all that it’s cracked up to be, but—it’s not more than you can handle.”

Betty J. Jones, from speech “Challenge to Women Graduate Students,” U of M, Nov. 1996

PROUD



Betty Jones, 1964

“You have done well so far. Remember, from here to success is yours. Don’t let yourself be deceived nor your parents and well-wishers. There are too many on the do-nothing seat. Please don’t take one there.”

High school graduation inscription written to Betty by her mother, Irene G. Jones

COLLEGE YEARS 1967-1971



Life-long friend, Edna Jean Williams and Betty Jean Jones, 1971.

A breath of fresh air

By Fred Eady, Professor of Theatre, Bennett College

“Our lives are more enriched by having known her, and let her make an imprint on us.”

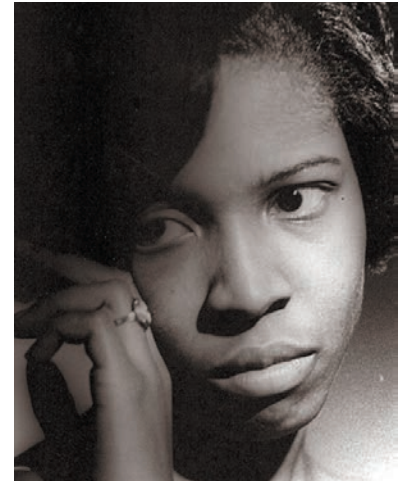
Fred Eady

It all began during the summer of 1968. Betty was enrolled in the Scholar’s Program at Bennett College. Vividly, I recall seeing Betty for the first time as she entered the Little Theatre with three or four other young ladies. Believe it or not, Betty was actually skipping down the aisle

of the theatre. Her skipping into the theatre has made an everlasting impression on me, and represented her interest, vigor, and determination in her endeavors. With that momentum, she achieved her goals, helped others, and enjoyed living. She enjoyed being in the presence of others and seeing to it that others are happy and comfortable. She was a true person of the theatre.

Betty’s participation in theatrical productions began during her arrival at Bennett College that summer. Her first part was in the summer theatre production of *Something Goes Bump In The Night*. She demonstrated such excellent talent that upon her return in the Fall she performed the mother in a play by Edward Albee. She went on to perform Ruth in Lorraine Hansberry’s *A Raisin In The Sun*. Soon after that experience she performed James Baldwin’s, Margaret Alexander in *The Amen Corner*. The viewer would not believe that she was a young, inexperienced college student. She performed as though she had many years of professional training.

Betty brought a breath of fresh air to the theatrical productions at Bennett. Everything in which



Theatrical portrait, Bennett College, 1970.

she participated was a big success. Since her graduation, we have always kept in touch. She was part of us for more than twenty-five years and contributed much to the development of theatre in our community. She was a true person of the arts. We loved her. We will always remember her. ■



Betty Jones in scene from The Amen Corner, 1969.



Bennett College reunion, 1991.



Bennett College reunion, 1986.

A gifted writer and quick study

By Owen D. Lewis, Greensboro Public Schools, North Carolina

Betty Jean Jones was employed by the Greensboro Public Schools from June 24, 1971 to February 28, 1973, when she resigned to take a position with B&C Associates, a nationally prominent public relations firm in High Point, North Carolina.

My position was director of public information and publications for the school district which included 44 schools K-12 and about 30,000 students.

Betty was one of two assistants in the department. She was hired immediately after her graduation from Bennett College, where she had an outstanding record.

Betty worked primarily in the area of print media, preparing news releases, and writing and editing various publications including a monthly employee house organ, a quarterly community newsletter, an annual report, and various brochures for recruitment, explanation of programs, and promotion.

She was a gifted writer. She was a quick study in cutting through educational jargon to express the facts in plain English. She was very good at the identification and explanation of positive aspects of the school district. She was a self-starter, imbued with a great work ethic. She had a real flair for the creative, and this manifested itself in her work and in her leisure activities.

Betty ‘marched to a different drummer.’ She was a unique personality, the consummate artist. We all missed her when she left for bigger and better things in the P.R. world. ■

“Betty ‘marched to a different drummer.’ She was a unique personality, the consummate artist.”

Owen D. Lewis

On the road to greatness

By Robert J. Brown, President, B&C Associates, Inc., High Point, North Carolina

Betty Jones worked for B&C Associates during the early 1970s.

I first started to work closely with her in 1973. Betty was an excellent writer and able to put her thoughts on paper with much ease. Since we are a public relations firm, a major part of our business deals with submitting proposals to clients and potential clients. I could always give her an assignment without

hesitation, because I knew that it would be completed in a timely manner and it would be done meticulously.

I knew that one day Betty would achieve greatness, and she was on her way to doing just that at the time of her untimely death. Betty wanted to teach and not just the fundamentals, she wanted to teach drama and theatrics. She wanted to travel and share the excitement of traveling to the four corners of the earth with her many students.

I remember hearing from Betty by postcard when she was on one of her many excursions. At the time, she was working on her doctorate at the University of Wisconsin, but she had received a fellowship to travel and to study in China. She was very excited about it and dreamed of traveling to other places. It was so like Betty to share her excitement with friends and associates. ■



“B&C Associates, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and the University of Michigan were only to be a few of the pitstops she would have made during a lifetime of teaching, sharing, and traveling, had she been allowed to complete her dreams.”

Robert J. Brown

T A L E N T E D

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO 1982-1994

“She taught me many lessons and—like Dr. Jones—I have preserved that rich history she so willingly shared. Today I do for others what she did for me.”

Vivian Wade Banks,
former student



Dr. Jones teaching UNCG theatre class, 1985.

“Self-confidence and self-affirmation must not be lost within ourselves, even if we must work with difficult people.”

Betty J. Jones



Betty's faculty office, UNC-Greensboro, 1986.

“Betty was a ‘class act,’ well-known for her warmth and generous spirit. She enjoyed giving freely of her time to those around her. She frequently and quietly gave financial support to those less fortunate. In a crisis, she was often the first to call and the last to leave. She was a second mother to my daughter, and I suspect to several others. We continue to miss her encouragement and her zest for life.”

Deborah Bell, Costume Designer,
UNCG Theatre Department



Betty and Deborah Bell, in New York City, 1994.

Betty Jean Jones received a master's degree in Directing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

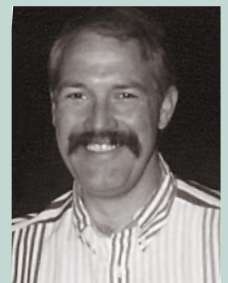
Ms. Jones taught for 12 years at UNC-Greensboro and moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1994 to teach theatre at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

At UNC-Greensboro she had

been an Associate Professor of theatre in the Department of Communication and Theatre. She was the Director of Graduate Studies in the Theatre Division and she taught American film in the Broadcasting/Cinema Division. She directed mainstage plays, and she coordinated Teacher Education for Theatre Arts and Speech Communication. ■

“I met Dr. Jones in 1987 at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. There is no doubt in my mind that she was the driving force at UNCG. She was an instigator, a pusher, the faculty member who wished to pull or push the Department forward. She served as a role model for all students, not just students of color.”

Jeffrey Keop, Dean, College of Fine Arts, Univ. of Nevada-Las Vegas



ENGAGING



Scene from Eugene O'Neill's *A Touch of the Poet*, directed by Betty Jones at UNCG, 1987.



Zenovi Korogodsky, *Russian Children's Theatre Director*, visiting UNCG, 1989.



From left: Anita Jones, Carolyn Montgomery, and Betty Jones on the set of *Mournin'*, 1991.

UNC-Greensboro Theatre Hall of Fame Award

To help celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary, UNCG Theatre established a Theatre Hall of Fame, and inducted its first twelve members in October 1997.

Six of the twelve recipients are living, and six were honored posthumously.

Dr. Robert C. Hansen, head of the Department of Broadcasting/Cinema and Theatre, said awards went to "those who have made significant contributions to UNCG Theatre over a sustained period of time."

Dr. Betty Jean Jones was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame in October 1997.



Betty visiting with actor, Richard Thomas ("John Boy" Walton) in her UNC-Greensboro faculty office.

"Part of being a professional is knowing what you do not know and what you do not do. But that which you do know and do—do it with excellence and confidence."

Betty J. Jones

ARTIST

"Betty's left a legacy of students to perpetuate the ideas and ideal to which she was committed. The children she never gave birth to are thousands of students and artists whom she gave birth to, nurtured, supported, and encouraged."

Carolyn Cole Montgomery, Playwright, former student



Scene from Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, directed by Betty Jones at UNCG, 1985.

A fine scholar and gifted artist

By Herman Middleton, Emeritus
Excellence Professor of Theatre,
UNC-Greensboro

I knew Betty Jean first as a student when she elected to pursue the MFA degree at UNCG. In addition to discovering her independence of character, I learned that she was a fine scholar and gifted artist. I directed her in leading roles in two plays, and will

encouraged her and was pleased to find her enthusiastic about returning to UNCG as a faculty member when her work there was finished. One thing I remember about these years was when she told me that I was her mentor—certainly one of the nicest things to happen to me.

The move to the University of Michigan was a wonderful promotion for her—full of career opportunities. One project she talked with me about was a production of Eugene O’Neill’s panoramic script, *Marco Millions*. While in China several years ago she laid the groundwork for an American production involving a Chinese company of actors playing the Asian parts and her students playing the Caucasian characters. This was now scheduled to take place at Michigan as a featured element of the University’s emphasis of cultural diversity as it moves into the 21st century. My, what an ambition she had.

Now, the production will not take place, of course. There is a poetic speech (see below) near the end of



Betty Jones, pictured with her mother, Irene, received her Ph.D. in *American Theatre and Drama* from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1983.



From left: Silas Jones, Betty Jones, Mildred Stovall, U-W Madison Professor Esther Merle Jackson, and Irene Jones, 1983.

the play which is full of my personal feelings for Betty Jean. It reveals my personal frustration when some young, successful person’s life meets an untimely end. ■

“Be careful of the dangerous demon of distraction. Don’t be pulled away from the work that is truly yours.”

Betty J. Jones



Betty Jones as “Guttman” in *Camino Real* at UNCG, 1977.

always remember her in Tennessee Williams, *Camino Real*, costumed in high black boots, and cracking a whip as she controlled order as mayor of the city.

When she went to the University of Wisconsin to secure her Ph.D., I

We lament the shortness of life. Life at its longest is brief enough. Too brief for the wisdom of joy, too long for the knowledge of sorrow. Sorrow becomes despair when death comes to the young, untimely. Oh, that her beauty could live again, that her youth could be born anew. Our Princess was young as Spring, she was beautiful as a bird or flower. Cruel when Spring is smitten by Winter, when birds are struck dead in full song, when the budding blossom is blighted! Alas that our Princess is dead, she was the song of songs, the perfume of perfumes, the perfect one! Our sobs stifle us, our tears wet the ground, our lamentations sadden the wind from the West. Yet we must bow humbly before the Omnipotent.

—Speech from Eugene O’Neill’s *Marco Millions*

CONFIDENT

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EUGENE O'NEILL, NANJING UNIVERSITY, CHINA 1988



Haiping Liu, at far left, with Betty Jones at a Eugene O'Neill Conference in Boston, 1995.

Dr. Betty J. Jones specialized in American Theatre and was particularly knowledgeable about Eugene O'Neill. Dr. Jones was devoted to the historical and aesthetic exploration of the entire American theatre.

Dr. Jones travelled to China in 1988 to give lectures and direct Chinese productions of Eugene O'Neill plays. Upon her return, she published several articles about her extensive experiences in China, where Eugene O'Neill is revered among theatre artists.

Margaret Loftus Ranald, president of the Eugene O'Neill Society, tells of becoming acquainted with her on a 1988 trip to an important conference in China. "She delivered a fine

paper, 'Directing the Plays of Eugene O'Neill: Style, Substance, and Synthesis.'"

The essay was later published in the book, "O'Neill in China," by Greenwood Press of Westport, Connecticut.

"A journey like that shows what people really are like," said Ranald. "One learns to share little necessities like aspirin, dental floss, film, and also to offer uncomplaining and caring help to others. Betty Jean was like that. She was also enquiring and curious, managing to get the guides to ask unusual, even intimate, questions of children, students, and others—all of whom she fascinated by her elegance and her interest." ■

"I always admired her vivacity and her integrity as a scholar. She will be missed by all her friends in China. It is a great loss to the Eugene O'Neill community."

Haiping Liu, Head of the Department of Literature and English, Nanjing University, China

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氏

Betty Jean Jones in Chinese.



Haiping Liu and Betty Jones at the International Conference on Eugene O'Neill in China, 1988.



Betty Jones, at far left, attending the International Conference on Eugene O'Neill in China, 1988.



Betty Jones, second from left, China, 1988.

"I had a dream of going to China. In 1988 I traveled there as the only African American on an international theatre trip. Quite an experience!"

Dr. Betty J. Jones

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
AT ANN ARBOR



Department of Theatre photo montage in memory of Dr. Betty Jones. Here she directs students in her final production *The Tooth of Crime*. Colleague and playwright Charles “OyamO” Gordon is seen in the left foreground.

SCHOLAR



“The spirit of Betty Jean was inclusiveness. She was simply the most inclusive person I knew, as well as a very strong, proud black woman.

“She had many songs to sing, and such stunning energy. I think that’s what made her so accessible to our students. She had a way of putting us all at ease while also spreading enthusiasm.”

Erik Fredricksen, Chair, Department of Theatre and Drama, University of Michigan

Dr. Betty J. Jones joined the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor faculty as Professor of Theatre in fall of 1994 after leaving the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Jones was subsequently appointed Associate Dean for Fellowships, Recruitment and Student Support at Rackham Graduate School in January of 1996, while retaining her professorship in the U-M Theatre Department.

In the theatre Dr. Jones founded a production concept

which she named American Theatre and Drama Project. The concept involved a total team approach to a play’s development and its production. She wrote the following about that concept: “This approach is a true collaboration of the entire production team of director, actors, designers, dramaturg, and stage technicians. We explore the playscript together, in the performance space, with volunteer actors (at first) to illuminate the text before we render production concepts or cast the production. This process of working is vital to approaching the American Theatre and Drama with its complexities of character, action, and setting.”

To accomplish her magnificent production of Sam Shepard’s *Tooth of Crime* Dr. Jones began the team process at Michigan in September 1995. However, the production concept was being developed by her American Theatre and Drama Project as early as May 1991. The play was ultimately produced in April of 1996. Dr. Jones wrote that her “...goal [was] to interest our entire community in the experience of this play through a process of truly building a production over time, in full view.” She

VISIONARY



"What was it about this woman that made me so desperate to bring her to [University of] Michigan? Her father knows. Her sisters know. Her extended family knows. Her friends,

colleagues, and students know. She was a serious scholar and an old-fashioned school marm, a lover of the theatre and a hands-on theatre worker.

"In our world that seems to be falling apart, these notions of collaboration that Betty Jean Jones leaves us with are precious.... As a true theatre artist, let us honor her memory by becoming the keepers of the best notions of simple human decency and social harmony."

Charles "OyamO" Gordon, Professor of Theatre and Drama, University of Michigan

said that "The play [would] be evenly cast with six men and six women with an eye to cultural inclusions within the American ethnic landscape."

After the play's production, the team process continued through an open forum that

"A rare combination of dignity, beauty, intelligence, and strength, Betty Jean never allowed herself to forget her own life's journey because she insisted on never forgetting from where she came."

Nancy Cantor, then-Dean of the Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan

seriously critiqued the production. Dr. Jones wanted the entire process to serve a vital educational function even beyond the standard theatre training. She was fond of repeating statements like:

"Never forget: process is the product." Or, "Remember: it is all about the journey—traveling toward is more important than arriving at." Or, finally, "Keep in touch with the people who took this journey with you—they are the keepers of the best in the true meaning of theatre artist."

"Working with her was probably the best acting experience I've ever had," said U-M theatre major Jeffrey M. Bender, who co-starred in Jones' production

of Sam Shepard's *The Tooth of Crime* in April 1996.

Playwright and theatre professor OyamO reflected on Jones' ceaseless enthusiasm for projects at hand: "Things would just pop into her head all the time. And by the time a project came around, she'd know everything about it.

"In Tooth of Crime I had never seen some of those students manage to do what they did in that show. They just



"Perhaps her greatest contribution [during a semester as a visiting professor at University of Nevada—Las Vegas] was a presentation to the faculty ... that criticized, in a very positive manner, the Department's lack of multi-culturalism and ways in which it could improve. I am please to state many of these ideas were implemented."

Jeffrey Keop, Dean, College of Fine Arts, University of Nevada—Las Vegas

stretched. And she made them stretch. That's how you learn at an early age. These students were positively glowing. They wouldn't dream of not working hard for her."

(continued on page 16)

"It's good to know that parameters can free you."

Betty J. Jones, from speech "Challenge to Women Graduate Students," U of M, Nov. 1996

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
AT ANN ARBOR

"I was Betty Jean's secretary and my time with her was a short seven months, but because of who she was, all the things she stood for, and all the qualities she embodied, her effect on me is nothing short of a lifetime. From the day I met her to this very day, my life continues to evolve because of Betty Jean Jones."

Carolyn Amick, Associate Dean's Office, Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan

"Don't fear your dreams, for they are the mark of a creative mind."

Arlena Hinson,
Betty's grandmother



Dr. Jones with her niece, Miranda, in her office, 1995.



In March 1997, University of Michigan faculty and staff installed a garden memorial—with benches, slate paving, and flowering cherry tree—adjacent to the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies building. A bronze plaque reads in part: "My blessing is this: I dwell within you all."

(continued from page 15)

Erik Fredricksen and U-M professor of costume design Jessica Hahn both felt "overwhelmed" by the outpouring of sympathy extended them at the 1997 American College Theatre Festival Conference in North Carolina, "It was awesome, the number of people who knew her," said Fredricksen. "The number of people she touched was just amazing."

"So many people at the conference knew her so well," said Hahn. "Her friendships and her influence were truly nationwide. She believed a stage production is a wholly collaborative experience, an undertaking that should include everyone involved from the very beginning including tech people and designers. People really appreciated the attention she'd devote to everyone, and of course she had that kind of charisma to pull things off. Some people are so vibrant they just suck the air out of a room."



Dr. Jones with University of Michigan theatre student, 1994.

Jones' upcoming projects had included a projected staging of Eugene O'Neill's play *Marco Millions* in conjunction with the Jaingsu Art Theatre of China. A production of Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* was also in the works, as well as a new play by OyamO, *The Pink and Say*, set in the Civil War. ■

"Had Betty Jean wished to continue to rise in the ranks of higher education administration, there is no doubt in my mind that she would have achieved whatever ranks she might have chosen as her goal, including the highest level."

Nancy Cantor, now Provost, University of Michigan

COMMITTED

“Betty Jean is the first professor to ever believe in me. She is the only one to make me feel a part of things. I thank her for that. I will miss her.”

Erin, University of Michigan Theatre student



Dr. Jones with University of Michigan theatre students, 1995.



University of Michigan Theatre 211-005 Class, 1994.



Dr. Jones with University of Michigan design project class, final meeting and lunch, 1995



“I would sum up Betty Jean’s impact as follows. Betty Jean had a remarkable and wide-ranging presence in the Graduate School and in the many

places she touched in the University. She compellingly merged a voice for social justice and inclusiveness with the scholarly agenda of the University in the arts and humanities, never forgetting the road she had traveled and reaching out to bring others with her on the path to achievement. She was a model and a leader for her students, faculty colleagues, and for all of us at Rackham, who loved her dearly.”

Nancy Cantor, then-Dean of the Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan

TEACHER

On August 7, 1997 the American Theatre and Drama Society named its annual national teaching award The Betty Jean Jones Award for Outstanding Teacher of American Theatre and Drama in honor of her own outstanding teaching and many contributions to American Theatre and Drama.

“As an African American female, I consider that my freedom was won at a great price. It is a sacrifice and reward which I cherish.”

Betty J. Jones



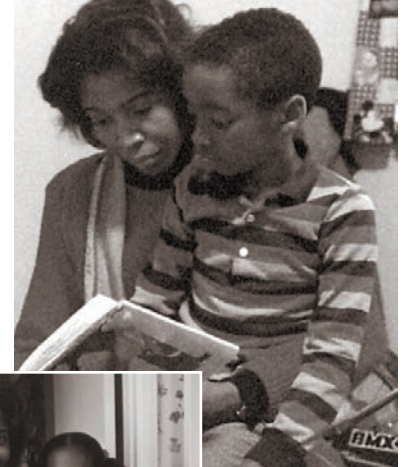
Betty—also known as Auntie Betty, Auntie Beej, or Auntie Pookie-Nose—with her niece, Miranda Irene, Cherry Grove beach, South Carolina, 1996.

A student of life

By Anita Jones Roehrick

Betty was always an old soul, wise for her years; a teacher and caretaker from the early years. I remember her standing at the kitchen stove in our mother's stead, frying hamburgers at four in the morning for one of my class trips. A peek out the back door showed the Greyhound bus idling in the school parking lot. Betty carefully packed my lunch, made a special punch and sent me off to join the other fourth graders

headed for Indian Mound in Macon. My memory of her at the stove has always been of a grown woman, making lunch for a nine year old child. Betty was only 13. Family was all important to Betty. Throughout her life she kept in touch with various family members, offering encouragement and laughter to young and



Above: Betty reading to godson Darryl Stanback.



Left: Betty with then-husband Ralph, and godchildren Darryl and Robin Stanback, 1985.

old alike. She enjoyed being the bridge that linked our family; carrying news back and forth in her visits to homes and reunions; sharing family photos; sending postcards and bringing stories and gifts from her travels.

Betty and I motivated each other to collect family history, connect

"I was very sad that you died"

Miranda Roehrick, Betty's 3½ year-old niece, 1998



Betty with her niece, Miranda, and sister, Anita, Bakers Beach, San Francisco, 1995.



"Auntie Betty and I used to talk on the phone a lot. We kept in touch. When I was a kid she'd pick the bones from my fish for me. I visited her in 1994 and she cooked fish. Sure enough she picked the bones out for me again. Auntie and I used to hang out. I miss her so much."

Derrick Stovall, Betty's nephew

BIG HEART

BIG LOVE



Far left:
Celebrating her mother's 64th birthday, 1990.



Near left:
During one of her many visits home to Albany, Georgia to spend time with her father, Silas, 1996.

with our past. Arlena Hinson was the only grandparent we were able to know. The others died years before our births. The eldest of eight, Grandmama Arlena was a large woman, round and brown. She worked as a domestic and sharecropper for years in Mitchell County, Georgia, the place we called down home. She was known for her warm heart and strong hand and was the head of her extended family. She was an all important person in Betty's life. When Grandmama Arlena came to live with our family after I

was born, Betty became a student of life at her knee. Even at an early age, she knew the value of Grandmama's words. In her work as a professor and Associate Dean she relied on quotes from Grandmama to lay the foundation for her messages. In her lectures, writing and conversations, Grandmama was the prophet and Betty became keeper of the word. Arlena Hinson died on January 17, 1968 at the age of 78. Some years later Betty wrote a poem in her honor—simply titled, *For Arlena* (see back cover). ■



Above:
Robin, Betty, & Darryl, Cherry Grove, NC, 1992.



Right:
Edna Jean Stanback, her daughter Robin, and Betty, 1976.

“Insist on doing some of the work you must do everyday.”

Betty J. Jones



“One of my fondest memories of Aunt Betty is June 8, 1986—the expression of love she showed when I received my high school diploma. She sustained and encouraged me to continue my education. I shall forever remain grateful.”

Darrell Stovall, Betty's nephew



The Joneses—Anita, Silas, Irene, & Betty, 1973

“Life is a sentence... but you get to write it! What will yours say?”

Betty J. Jones

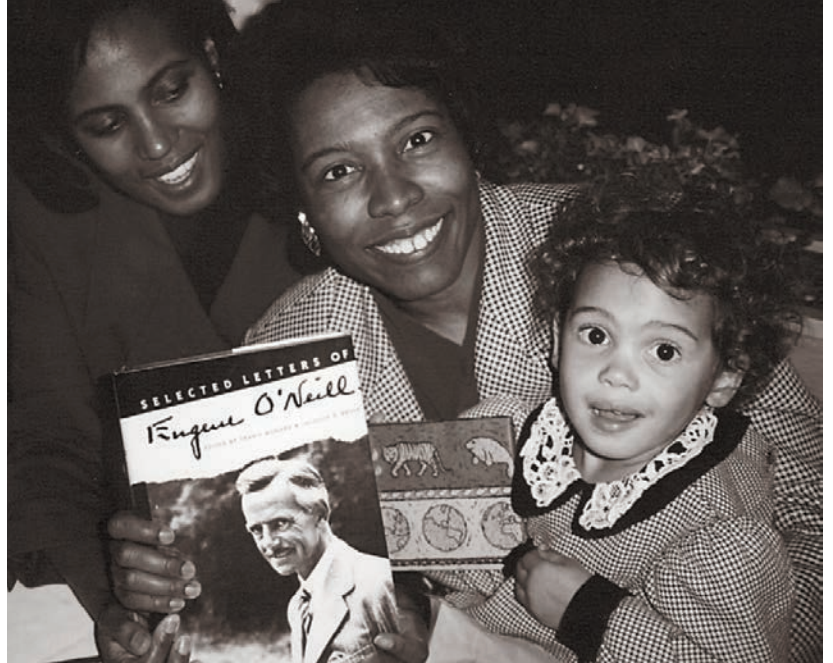
FAMILY & FRIENDS



“Keeping a commitment to family, friends, community, and career is hard work. My sister was up to the task every day of her life. She lived her life. She

often reminded me, ‘Anita, people are what matter.’ To her I say, you were snatched away too soon, Beej. Much too soon.”

Anita Jones Roehrick, Betty's sister



Anita Jones Roehrick, Betty and her niece Miranda Roehrick celebrating Betty's 47th birthday in San Francisco, December 11, 1996.



From left: Betty, Miranda, Edna Jean Stanback, & Sarah McKoy vacationing in Cherry Grove, SC, 1996.



From left: Danny Hoback, Ralph Speas, Silas & Irene Jones, Betty Jones, and Mandy Hoback, 1988.



From left: Flora Devine, Anita Jones, Mildred Stovall, and Betty Jones: bridesmaids in Anita & Rob's wedding, 1987.



From left: Anita Jones, Derrick Stovall, Betty Jones, and Darrell Stovall, attending Mildred Stovall Jones' wedding, 1987.

“The memories of Betty are many and wonderful. She was always very supportive and loving, and dedicated to her nephews—my sons—and their education. My son Darrell had shown an interest in attending The School of Performing Arts in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. When Betty learned we were having financial difficulty, she provided half of the tuition as a gift.”

Mildred P. Stovall Jones, Betty's sister

GIVING

EASY SMILE



Proposing a toast to Anita and Rob at their wedding reception in San Francisco, 1987



Betty and Rob "jumping the broom" at wedding rehearsal, San Francisco, 1987.

"Betty was like a sister to me, the sister I never had—and her relationship with our daughter, Miranda, was particularly special, like the daughter she never had. Betty had plans to take Miranda to Europe as a teenager, and to start a college savings fund for her. But most of all, she gave of herself. Miranda often pats her chest saying, 'Auntie is here in our hearts' and includes her in saying 'Grace' at the dinner table. The countless people she touched—and Betty—have sustained an inconceivable loss. I love you Beej."



Rob Roehrick, Betty's brother-in-law



Fishing with her father, Silas, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, 1994.



Betty, far right, celebrating the holidays with Vivian Wade, her father Silas Jones, and her step-grandchildren Samantha and Brianna, Albany, Georgia, 1995.



Traveling with friends Carolyn Cole Montgomery, Malachi Greene, and Lee Freeman, 1990.

IN THE LAND OF THE SKY

*it was night fall when up we came
and my ears signaled we were high*

*I was looking at the lights on the hills
and in the valley—ornaments on a huge
Christmas tree*

*mind filled with expectation
and eyes wide with wonder
taking the mountain I felt reverent
and fulfilled*

*wrapped in a blanket of night
I swooned at the sensations
of sight and sound as we loped
down at midday next*

*the snow lingers in spots on roofs
roads and running streams
over rocks and rest stops*

*powder, blade and asphalt
explode, crush and smother
once unspoiled land*

*the mountain still reigns supreme
the constant force
holding firm its ground.*

Betty J. Jones





“I was the last family member to see her alive. We flew into the Cincinnati airport together, then we split up. She hugged my neck and said, ‘Daddy, I’ll call you when you get home. I’ll beat you home.’ That’s the last thing she said to me, ‘I’ll beat you home.’”

Silas J. Jones,
Betty’s father

Taking a break from the Senior Theatre USA Conference in Las Vegas, Betty and her father, Silas, visit Hoover Dam and the surrounding area, January 8, 1997 (one day before the crash of Comair Flight 3272).

BEAUTIFUL



FOR ARLENA

*Grandma told me stories that
would make your hair curl—
some more—and your blood
curdle like good unpasteurized
country buttermilk,
chilled in the ice box in a
porcelain pitcher.*

*Grandma wore a paper hat,
all star tennis shoes and
a long dress with a long
apron that fit over head
and tied in the back—she
made the dress and apron and hat
and Ma bought the tennis shoes.*

*Grandma had long hair that was coarse
and silver grey and you only got
to see it on rare occasions when off
came the paper hat and the cloth
that wrapped the braids and she
washed and combed it and quickly
put it back like it was.*

*Grandma walked sometimes with a stick
but all the time with definition and
direction and all the things Fred says
go into the making of a good character.
And she was a character, Grandma was,
but mostly she was a large woman in
stature and state of mind—
with so much to give.*

*Grandma loved and lived and let me know
that all was never lost
unless I willed it so.
And when she died at 87—
she never died
for I remember her then
and still see her now and
she lives in all she knew
and touched
and in this.*

Betty J. Jones