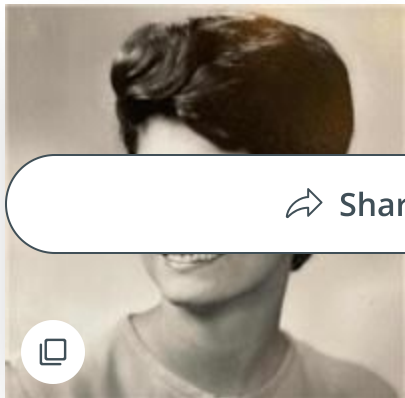


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Phyllis Alexander Kaplan

1939 - 2023



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Phyllis Kaplan Obituary

Phyllis Alexander Kaplan, 83, passed away on April 19th in Salt Lake City, Utah. After a short hospital stay following a heart attack, she died peacefully in her sleep, surrounded by her husband, children, and grandchildren.

After 50 years in Memphis, Tennessee, she and her husband moved to Salt Lake City in 2020 to live with her daughter's family. Born on November 22, 1939, to L. Julian Alexander and Natalie Loeb Alexander in Little Rock, Arkansas, Phyllis was a life-long educator, avid tennis player, opera aficionado, and devoted reader of a wide variety of literature. Those who knew her experienced her quick wit, irreverent sense of humor, and stories of growing up in Little Rock, as well as how she cherished being able to gather with friends and family.

Phyllis graduated from Little Rock Central High School in 1957, and from Sophie Newcomb College of Tulane University in 1961. At both, she was a varsity cheerleader, and at Newcomb was the president of the Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority. Later, she earned a Master's Degree from Teachers College, Columbia University. After teaching English at high schools in Dallas, Texas, and New York State, she returned to Little Rock in 1968 when her mother fell ill. Not long after her mother's death in February of that year, she was invited to Memphis by her college roommate, Cecile Prager, for Passover. Prager and a friend, Kirk Lewis, set up Phyllis on a blind date with Edward M. Kaplan, a young Memphis lawyer. Just a few months later, Phyllis and Eddie had a small wedding ceremony in her father's living room in Little Rock. They settled in Memphis and started a family, with son Alex arriving in 1970 and daughter Natalie in 1973.

Phyllis was a firm believer in supporting one's passions whenever possible, either with time or money. She loved classical music, contributing to Opera Memphis and serving as president of Concerts International. She cared deeply about social justice through

improving the lives of women, contributing to Planned Parenthood and serving as co-president of the Memphis chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women. After leaving teaching when she had children, she chose to return to the profession when they were old enough to go to school, teaching English as a second language at the Memphis Hebrew Academy to Jewish children who had fled the Soviet Union. Ultimately, she did the same at the University of Memphis for decades' worth of students from all over the world. ×

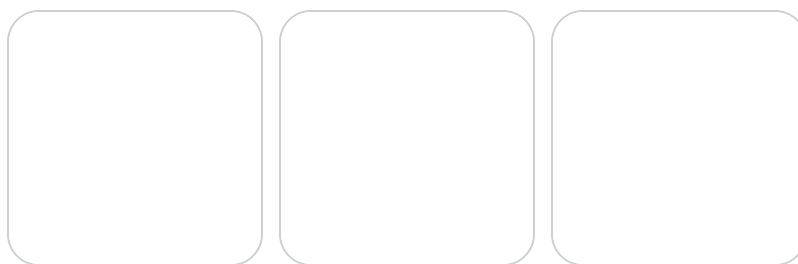
At the time of her passing, she was a member of three synagogues - B'nai Israel of Little Rock, Temple Israel of Memphis, and Har Shalom of Park City.

She is survived by her husband of 54 years, Eddie; their daughter Natalie and son-in-law Toby Schmidt of Salt Lake City, Utah; their son Alex and daughter-in-law Lisa of Boston, Massachusetts; and their granddaughters Eva Schmidt and Nora Kaplan. She was very recently pre-deceased by her beloved older sister, Natalie Greenberg, and survived by brother-in-law S.L. Greenberg, of Beaumont, TX, as well as S.L. & Natalie's children and grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the Kaplan family suggests a donation to the Temple Israel of Memphis Rabbi Emeritus Harry Danziger Discretionary Fund at timemphs.org/giving/.

A memorial service will be held at Temple Israel of Memphis at 10 am on Sunday, May 14th.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).



Memories and Condolences for Phyllis Kaplan



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From

Your Name

Your Email (will not be displayed)

Email Address



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Eleanor White December 18, 2024

Still miss Phyllis! Hope all the Utah Kaplans are well.

Much love,

Eleanor and Barry White, Newton Centre, MA

 Share



Connie Zendel Larimer December 28, 2023

I realize this is way late but I just read about it in the Newcomb news. Phyllis was my ninth grade English teacher at Tuckahoe High School in suburban New York City. She was a mentor and friend and the

[See More](#)

always be grateful for the role Phyllis played in my life.

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Dan and Sally Pellegrom May 17, 2023

Sally and I are diminished by the loss of Phyllis Kaplan. Her wit and sense of humor, her intellect and compassion, her values and convictions combined to make her a very special human being. Phyllis

[See More](#)

Eddie, Alex and Natalie, we are thinking of you as we write.

Dan and Sally Pellegrom, Newton
Massachusetts

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jim pfeifer May 14, 2023

I am proud to be related to
Phyllis and her family.



 Share



Kathy Steuer May 7, 2023

Dear Eddie, Alex, and Natalie,
Phyllis was always a part of my life. I remember her and Eddie
bringing infant Alex to dinner at my parents' new house in 1970 or

[See More](#)

Love,
Kathy Steuer

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Alex Kaplan April 29, 2023

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Alex Kaplan April 29, 2023

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Beni Bonucchi April 27, 2023

Mr. Kaplan and I worked together at Armstrong Allen, attorneys, for over 10 years. Mr. Kaplan, I extend my deepest condolences to you and your family at this time. Loved you then and love you still, even though you were a tough taskmaster, you were always one of the special ones at AAPGJH.

 Share



Eleanor White April 25, 2023

Barry and I are heartbroken at the loss of Phyllis Kaplan. The wife of my beloved cousin Eddie Kaplan, she was a real original. Combining the best of the sweet, well-mannered Southern woman with the spice of a witty, smart, modern woman, Phyllis was a delight. Loved by the whole extended family, she will be missed. Her memory will be for a blessing. Eleanor and Barry White, Newton, Massachusetts

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Memorial Events for Phyllis Kaplan

MAY
14

Memorial service

10:00 a.m.

Temple Israel of Memphis

1376 East Massey Road, Memphis, TN 38120

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How to support Phyllis's loved ones



Honor a beloved veteran with a special tribute of 'Taps' at the National WWI Memorial in Washington, D.C.

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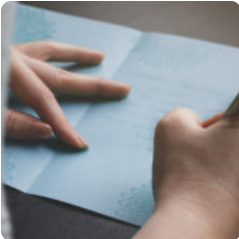
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Resources to help you cope with loss



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Information and advice to help you cope with the death of someone important to you.

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Estate Settlement Guide

If you're in charge of handling the affairs for a recently deceased loved one, this guide offers a helpful checklist.

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Legacy's Linnea Crowther discusses how families talk about causes of death in the obituaries they write.

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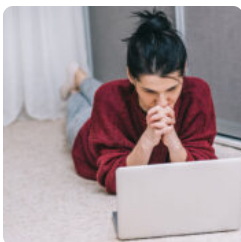
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Ways to honor Phyllis Kaplan's life and legacy



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Ace Frehley (1951–2025), Kiss guitarist remembered as the Spaceman

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Penelope Milford (1948–2025), Oscar-nominated co-star of Coming Home

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Miss Major Griffin-Gracy (1946–2025), trailblazing trans rights icon

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Drew Struzan (1947–2025), artist who defined the modern movie poster

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