

Elizabeth Gerrety

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Elizabeth Fitzpatrick Gerrety

University Librarian

Elizabeth "Betty" Fitzpatrick Gerrety, 81, a retired librarian for the George Washington University Medical Center and for Georgetown University, died July 3 of a heart attack at Chevy Chase House, an assisted living residence in Chevy Chase.

Mrs. Gerrety was a fourth-generation Washingtonian. Her father, John C. Fitzpatrick, was chief of the manuscripts division at the Library of Congress and editor of the 39-volume "The Writings of Washington." The young Betty Fitzpatrick spent hours at her father's side in the library, helping him with his research on Washington, the Continental Congress, Martin Van Buren and other subjects.

She graduated from Immaculata High School in 1941 and from Trinity University in 1945.

In 1974, after working as a homemaker for many years, she began a career as a librarian at the Little Falls Library in Bethesda. She was with the Paul Himmelfarb Health Sciences Library at the GWU Medical Center from 1978 to 1982 and with the Lauinger Library at Georgetown University from 1982 to 1993.

After retiring from Georgetown, she lived for varying lengths of time at the Benedictine monastery in Oceanside, Calif., at Our Lady of Snows monastery in Belleville, Ill., and at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Ind. In 1999, she returned to the District, where she was a member of Annunciation Catholic Church. An avid reader and scholar, she, like her father, was an expert on the life of George Washington.

Her husband, Joseph Manning Gerrety, died in 1987.

Survivors include eight children, Cathy Wald of Alpharetta, Ga., Joseph Gerrety Jr. of Bethesda, Mary Duncan of Herndon, John Gerrety of Washington, Donald Gerrety of Rockville, James Gerrety of Danmascus, Paul Gerrety of Rockville and Christina Horan of Page, Ariz. and 23 grandchildren.