

Memorial Tribute to *Emma Read Oppenheimer*
Wednesday, September 20, 2023
Presented by Ruth Cunningham

Sadly, very few of you here today had the pleasure of knowing Emma Oppenheimer. Emma died recently at the age of 99. When Emma entered a room, her smile and enthusiasm would light up the whole room.

A native of Roanoke, Emma came to Richmond in 1956 to make a new home here after marrying St. Julian Oppenheimer. They lived on Rothesay Circle, where she took great joy in rose gardening and boxwood.

Some of her earliest and best friends were members of the Tuckahoe Garden Club. She soon became known for her consummate flower arranging skills and love of horticulture. She and Elizabeth Towers wrote the popular Tuckahoe Garden Club's "Gardening Guide", a treasure of regional horticulture knowledge used for decades by Virginia gardeners. In 1981, Emma received the Garden Club of Virginia's Horticulture Award of Merit. She was statewide chair of Historic Garden Week in 1993.

Outside of the Club, she devoted her flower arranging talents to the Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church Altar Guild and later for Westminster Canterbury of Richmond. Every year, friends would stand in line to purchase one of her cherished Christmas wreaths made from osmanthus.

Emma was a graduate of Hollins University with a degree in general art. Her artistry was devoted to making the world a more beautiful place for others.

Emma Read Oppenheimer's Positions with Tuckahoe Garden Club, GCA and GCV

Member 1976-2023

- Awards
- Christmas Auction
- TGC First Vice President
- Garden Design Advisor
- GCA and GCV Flower Shows
- GCV Flower Shows Committee
- GCV HGW Chairman
- Memorials
- Nominating
- Provisionals
- Zone VII Meeting Chairman
- Sustainer Representative

Emma Read Oppenheimer's Awards:

- GCA Awards:
 - Club Floral Design Achievement Award – 2005
 - Club Horticulture Award – 1974
 - Member Years of Service Certificate, 55 years - 2018
- GCV Awards:
 - The Horticulture Award of Merit – 1981
- TGC Awards:
 - The Martha Whitehead Michaux Bowl – 1985
 - The President's Award - 2007