

Miriam Mills Cousins



Miriam Mills Cousins, 84, of Grinnell, died Wednesday, May 26, 2004, at Mayflower.

A memorial is planned at a later date..

The daughter of Dr. R.T. and Ruth Mills, she was born July 24, 1919, in Grinnell and was a 1997 graduate of Grinnell High School. She first won recognition for her voice in 1931 when she took first prize in the grammar school section of the Iowa Federation of Music Clubs voice contest. Thereafter, she participated in many musical and drama events in high school including "In Old Vienna," "H.M.S. Pinafore" and the senior play, "Dollars from Heaven."

After studying voice at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., she returned to Grinnell in 1938 to marry Lloyd Cousins, her piano accompanist. They settled in Evanston where they raised three sons while she pursued a varied musical career. Her engagements during the 1940s in Chicago included starring roles in "La

Traviata," "Die Fledermaus" and "Down in the Valley." She also sang on radio, was a soloist at Orchestra Hall and appeared in oratorios in the Chicago area and Midwest including "The Messiah" at Cornell and Simpson Colleges in Iowa. Between 1948 and 1976 she was a soprano soloist at Wilmette Parish Methodist Church and in 1953 accepted the same position at the Bahai Temple.

In 1951 the Cousins founded Cousins Tours which specialized in European travel with musical performances at Salzburg, Rome, Bayreuth and elsewhere. In 1959 she opened the Cousins Travel Agency in Evanston which she managed until retiring in 1987. She returned to Grinnell in 2002, residing at Mayflower.

She is survived by three sons, six grandchildren; six great grandchildren, and two brothers, Gene Mills and Kenneth Mills of Houston, Texas, and Kansas City, Mo., respectively.

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