

B.G. 'Babe' Voertman

B.G. "Babe" Voertman, 70, of 1510 Broad St. died of cancer at her home Wednesday, Oct. 13.

A memorial service was conducted Saturday in Herrick Chapel on the Grinnell College campus.

She was born Nov. 26, 1928, in Denton, Texas, to Chester and Lucille Monroe Gough. She was raised in Denton and graduated from Denton High School in 1945.

She attended North Texas State University, the University of Texas, Michigan State University and Grinnell College, earning her B.A. degree in speech and theater from Grinnell in 1967. She also studied dance at the Graham School of Contemporary Dance in New York.

She was married to Robert F. Voertman in 1947. They moved to Grinnell where she taught in the speech and theater department at the college. She choreographed, directed and acted in several theater productions, retiring in 1995 as assistant professor emerita of theater (dance).

In the early 1960s she organized and trained a dance company of young men and women in Costa Rica. The dance company performed several folk dances at the National Theater and still tours Costa Rica, performing regularly on television.

She was active in the Grinnell Community Theatre as an actor and directed "Ten Nights in a Barroom," "Mouse Trap," "Black Comedy" and "To Cole ... with Love."

She was instrumental in bringing professional theater to Grinnell when she and a group of friends established Grinnell Productions.

She was a member of the American Dance Guild and was past president and director of the Iowa State Arts Council. She also served as co-director of the Iowa Dance Councils at Grinnell and Cornell colleges.

Surviving are her daughter, Jami Fernette of Evergreen, Colo., and her son, Todd of Moravia, Iowa.

Her husband, her parents and her partner, Barbara Lien, preceded her in death.

A memorial fund in her name has been established at Grinnell College.

(Robert)