Mrs. Josephine Anne Swift Merritt

February 25, 2012

Mrs. Josephine Anne Swift Merritt, known as Jerry to her old friends and Anne to her new ones, passed from this world to her place of rest at the age of 80 on February 25, 2012. Mrs. Merritt, born in 1931, grew up in Jackson Heights, N.Y. She was the beloved daughter of Josephine Trollan and Edward Swift, and sister of Edward and Ruth, all of whom have passed. As a girl, she was a dancer and earned many honors for her academic achievements. Mrs. Merritt married Matthew J. Merritt Jr. and together they had 6 children. They moved their family to the Berkshires in 1963, where they began their careers in the field of Education. Most notably, the Merritt's started the Valleyhead School for special needs girls in 1969 and continued to serve these children for 40 years. Mrs. Merritt was an avid gardener, a lover of birds and woodland creatures and supported numerous animal shelters. She was an active member of the Church on the Hill, and a former member of the Richmond Congregation Church and St. Ann's Church in Lenox. Mrs. Merritt also endowed the Children's library at the Richmond Elementary School, and gave generously to children's organizations and to those in need. Mrs. Merritt is survived by her former husband, Matthew Joseph Merritt Jr., her six loving children; MaryElizabeth, Ellen, Matthew, Edward, Charles and Magi, her seven grandchildren; Elizabeth, Cate, Eli, Matthew, Sam, Emma, and Ruby, her three nieces; Carol Ann, Susan and Nancy, and nephew Edward. Mrs. Merritt will be deeply missed by her family and friends. She will be remembered for her hockey bell, her tailgate parties, her green thumb, her generosity and

straight forward talk, and as a woman who gave herself to her family and to life. FUNERAL NOTICE: A private wake for family and her closest friends will be at the Roche Funeral Home in Lenox on Thursday, March 1st from 6 to 7 p.m. The funeral service will be held at Church on the Hill in Lenox at 1 p.m., on Friday, March 2nd. A celebration of her life will be directly following the funeral services. Come share your memories, stories, and love. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Church on the Hill or the Christian Center.