



Betsye Kay Finch

Foundation

5th Anniversary

Luncheon

SARDI'S

RESTAURANT



October 25th, Noon

TRC Charter Alum Kathleen Conry, and Residency Member Kaylan Bradford (for more info on Kaylan, see the Residency section below) will be speaking on behalf of TRC at Sardi's in NYC on Oct. 25. TRC members are invited to celebrate the life of Betsye Kay Finch, a former Radio City Music Hall Rockette, tap and jazz dancer, and proud member of The Rehearsal Club. The luncheon will also celebrate the 5th year of the Betsye Kay Finch Performing Arts Foundation, Inc., founded by her daughter, Alexis Rocker, to honor her musical mother with annual scholarships for Polk County FL high school seniors aiming to pursue a college degree in dance and musical theatre.

Betsye began dance lessons at the age of 4 and fell in love with the rhythm and resonance of tap. At 16, she moved to NYC to study dance and drama at the Feagin School of Dramatic Art. She had a brief dancing stint as a Rockette at Radio City Music Hall, while pursuing dance roles on and off Broadway. She took tap lessons from Ziegfeld Follies choreographer Ned Wayburn and from Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, who brought tap "up on its toes, dancing upright and swinging," according to his biographer. After just 5 years in NYC, Betsye held four coveted union cards: Actors' Equity, the American Guild of Variety Artists, SAG, and American Federation of TV and Radio Artists.

Ms. Finch left Broadway's bright lights in 1949 to return to her hometown of Lakeland, FL, where she married and raised two children. While she traded her stage life for family life, Betsye kept dancing — as a jazz, tap and ballet teacher at Betsye Kay's School of Dance, where she taught dance for 30 years. She also performed in, choreographed, and coached dancers for Lakeland Little Theatre, Mark I & II Dinner Theatres, and Winter Haven Community Theatre, among others.

Her daughter, Alexis Rocker, launched the Betsye Kay Finch Performing Arts Foundation in 2019 (the same year TRC incorporated!) following her mother's death at age 92, so that her "love of dance and theatre will live on." She looks forward to meeting more of TRC membership at the Sardi's luncheon. For reservations to sit with your TRC sisters at the luncheon, contact Denise@denisepence.com. For more info on the Foundation, visit <https://www.bkfperformingarts.org/contact>.

