



Mrs. Barbara Bush, an historic First Lady for generations to come by Kumu Gupta

Living in Quincy, MA, I felt a special connection to Mrs. Barbara Bush who is the only First Lady to have been a mother and wife of a U.S. President like Abigail Adams was to Founding Father and 2nd U.S. President and son 6th U.S. President John Quincy Adams. Barbara Bush is also the only person to be wife of both a Vice President and President like Abigail Adams. The 73 year adoring relationship between President H.W. Bush & Mrs. Bush witnessed via letter writing, is like John and Abigail Adams, an expression of eternal love seen even after nearly 200 years of founding of this nation. Quincy, MA is in Norfolk County which is known as County of Presidents for its connection to 4 U.S. Presidents - besides John and John Quincy Adams, President H.W. Bush was born in Milton, a town next door to Quincy and Brookline is the birthplace of President John F. Kennedy. And finally, Kennebunkport, the Bush family summer retreat in Maine is part of the New England states. Thus, all in all a strong presence and influence of President and Mrs. Bush is felt here, in our daily lives. Being the matriarch of the Bush family, steward and guiding light for 5 children, 14 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren, Mrs. Barbara Bush was a rock for the family and will be missed dearly, especially by President Bush who had come to rely on her for nearly three quarters of a century.

As someone who grew up in Kuwait as a child, I admire the fact that Mrs. Barbara Bush took the pains to walk through the sands of the Saudi Arabian desert to meet with U.S. Desert Storm troops and share a Thanksgiving meal with them there. And I am so grateful to President H.W. Bush for freeing Kuwait.

Mrs. Barbara Bush has another deep connection to American history, in that she was part of the Rosie the Riveter movement, women who helped with WW I and II, working in a nuts and bolts factory. We are fortunate to experience Rosie's with the President of the MA Rosie the Riveter chapter being a Quincy native, in her 90's as well. And to think, there is a struggle to see more women in STEM today in the 21st century. Thus as a grandmother, mother, wife, a 'Rosie', First & 2nd Lady and a champion of literacy especially for women, Mrs. Barbara Bush said it beautifully in her Wellesley College Commencement Speech - "Who knows? Somewhere out in this audience may even be someone who will one day follow in my footsteps and preside over the White House as the president's spouse, and I wish him well. " She will always be a strong role model and beacon of hope for women everywhere, for generations to come.

Even as a First Lady, Mrs. Barbara Bush's qualities of grace and kindness shone through, as experienced by then White House Chef John Moeller who recollects his first time meeting her, new on the job; while visiting with her friends Mrs. Bush summoned Chef Moeller who was serving them lunch, his first at the white house, to welcome him and talk about meeting his aunt on their campaign trail months ago. Chef Moeller was very touched and impressed with Mrs. Bush's kindness towards him and the entire staff, broccoli or no broccoli !
May Her Soul Rest in Peace.