



JoAnne Ketchum Mardis

March 2, 1948 - September 17, 2021

JoAnne Ketchum Mardis began life on the farm of Rufus Ketchum and Mildred Shelton Ketchum on March 2, 1948, in Tippah County, Mississippi. As with most farm kids of her day, she milked cows, slopped hogs, chopped and picked cotton, and learned how to drive a tractor. After high school graduation and being tired of farm life, she moved to Memphis. Her goal was to become a secretary. She attended a business college and Mid-South Bible College. In May 1968, she met her future husband, Larry Mardis, and they were married in 1971. JoAnne worked at various jobs, including being a secretary, sales tax collector, small business owner and, finally, the Post Office. Later in life, she sold honey at the farmers markets in Oxford.

Being civic minded, she volunteered at an elementary school to do paired/repeated reading with students who had reading problems. For 20 years, she worked Bingo as a fund raising activity with a Lions Club. The Louisiana School Psychological Association (LSPA) gave her an award for volunteering with that organization's yearly convention. When she lived in Clinton, Louisiana, she was a school board watcher and was interviewed several times by the Baton Rouge television stations. She once organized a group to elect new school board members. That group was successful in defeating 7 of 12 school board members. She was a Master Gardner, a member of the Daughters of American Revolution (DAR) and St. Andrews Methodist Church in Oxford. She was very proud of having two valedictorians in the family-daughter and grandson and probably a third with her

granddaughter. She seldom missed an Ole Miss football or basketball game. After the children left home, JoAnne and Larry moved to Taylor, Mississippi, and decided to travel and see the world. Travel took them to all 50 states and 17 countries. She spent birthdays visiting Paris, viewing the Sistine Chapel in Rome, floating the Rhine River in Germany, hiking to the Phantom Ranch in the Grand Canyon, cruising in the Caribbean and visiting Washington, D.C. As a retirement trip, JoAnne and Larry drove the Alaskan Highway to Alaska, which took 40 days and covered 12,000 miles. Later in life, she decided that she needed to do more to make life easier for people, which she saw as her Christian duty in life. She and Larry did mission trips to repair homes damaged by floods, hurricanes and tornadoes. She made two trips to Africa. The second trip was to drill a water well at a small Methodist hospital in Zimbabwe. Her favorite vacation trip was to Iceland. While on that trip to Iceland and later to Eastern Europe, she did not feel well. After getting home, she was diagnosed with myelodysplastic/myeloproliferative disease, and had a stem cell transplant at MDAnderson in Houston, TX. The stem cell transplant was successful, but it compromised her immune system. A bacterial infection caused her death on September 17, 2021.

She leaves behind Larry, her husband of 50 years. A daughter Karen (Andrew Lafferty) and two grandchildren- Caleb, who is a student at Brown University, and Anna, who is a senior in high school. A son Matthew (Mandy) and two grandchildren- Abby, who is a fifth grader, and Brayden, who is 4 years old. She also leaves behind one brother Fred Ketchum and four sisters Pat Fiveash, Helen (Wesley) Reed, Kathy Ketchum and Carolyn (Mike) Jones. Two brothers -Larry Ketchum (Sharon) and Elmer Lee Ketchum (Dorothy)- preceded her in death. She will be buried at 10 am on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, in the Antioch Cemetery near Ripley, Mississippi, on land has been in the family since the late 1830's. Due to Covid, there will only be a graveside service for vaccinated relatives and friends. In lieu of flowers, please donate to a charity of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Antioch Cemetery

CR 419
Ripley, MS 38663

Previous Events

Graveside Service

SEP **21**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Antioch Cemetery
CR 419
Ripley, MS 38663

Tribute Wall



“ *JoAnne Ketchum Mardis*

October 05, 2023 at 12:14 PM



“ *So sorry for the loss of JoAnne. I know she was a wonderful mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. God Bless this precious family for comfort and peace at this difficult time in their life. Love, Colleen Graves Dunnam.*



Colleen G Dunnam - September 20, 2021 at 11:26 PM



“ *Ruth Spires sent a virtual gift in memory of JoAnne Ketchum Mardis*



Ruth Spires - September 18, 2021 at 03:35 PM



“ *Lois Watson lit a candle in memory of JoAnne Ketchum Mardis*



Lois Watson - September 18, 2021 at 09:53 AM