



Mavis S. Johnson

July 4, 1935 - April 1, 2025

Mavis S. Johnson, the “baby of nine” whose twinkle of eye and loving spirit endeared her to family and friends—as well as countless strangers who could not resist her charm—died peacefully April 1 in her beloved Griffin, Georgia, attended at her side by her husband, Jack Jackson, her daughter, Celindy Johnson Kellum, and her devoted caregiver, Loretta Ford. Mavis was 89. Mavis’s childhood was spent in Heard County in west central Georgia. Born in 1935 to Rev. Oscar Shelley Sheets and Emily Myrtice Bledsoe, she grew up on a rural farm in the Red Oak community. The early years, still affected by the Depression, were shaped by financial struggle, as it was for almost everyone they knew. Mavis’s cherished memories of those years, however, often retold later at family gatherings, unveiled a separate story. Mischief, high jinks, and practical jokes, usually perpetrated by her older brothers, filled many childhood hours. Mavis often got the last word, not to mention loving retribution.

Mavis was no push over, and her resilience only grew stronger. In 1954, soon after meeting as students at Berry College, she and Jack married. Six weeks later, Jack was drafted into the U.S. Army and deployed to Germany. Unable to join him, Mavis “gathered herself” and to settle her dilemma moved in with her older sister, Wilene. The move was restorative. A lesson gained from her beginnings, family gave her strength and fueled her joy.

For the last 70 years, Mavis and Jack have lived in Griffin where after military service Jack returned to develop internationally renowned agronomy research

for the local Experiment Station, which was later to be incorporated into the University of Georgia. During those years, Mavis enjoyed her own professional career, working in administrative roles for several local businesses. From time to time, when Jack was invited to speak at international research meetings, together they discovered the allure of travel. Friendships bloomed in unexpected places. On a trip to Australia, never one to be intimidated, Mavis approached a timid (some said standoffish) street musician. Before long they were deep in conversation.

However, for both Mavis and Jack devotion to family was the central element in their lives, marked especially by Celindy's birth in 1958 and the amazingly extensive "family" they enjoy at Griffin's First United Methodist Church, five minutes from their longtime home on Skyline Drive, designed and built by Mavis's brother Robert. Attentive to her church family, Mavis chaired several committees there and for more than twenty years sang in the choir.

Mavis is preceded in death by her three sisters and their spouses (Doris and her husband, Smitty; Ople; and Wilene and her husband, Clarence) and five brothers (Gene and his wife, Emily; Herchel and his wife, Gladys; Joel, who died an infant; Paul and his wife, Evelyn; and Robert and his wife, Norma). In addition to Jack and Celindy, Mavis is survived by two step-sisters, Dara and Vara (Dara's husband, Charles, and Vara's husbands, Max and Gordon, are deceased). Dara and Vara are daughters of Minnie Howard Worley whom Rev. Sheets married after Mavis's birth mother Myrtice died in 1941. Also surviving is Mavis's son-in-law Glenn Kellum. As a group, Mavis's siblings were exceptionally close, and along with their spouses, rarely saw a year when there was no annual Sheets Family Reunion, especially at Christmastime. In her last weeks, one of Mavis's most fervent hopes was to see the tradition preserved among the family's younger generation.

A funeral service for Mavis S. Johnson will be held Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. in the chapel at Griffin First United Methodist Church, 1401 Maple Drive, preceded at 10:00 a.m. by visitation in the church parlor. Officiating will be Rev. Brent Ward. A graveside service will be held immediately afterward at

Oak Hill Cemetery, Griffin. Handling arrangements is Haisten-McCullough Funeral Home of Griffin. In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to Griffin First United Methodist Church.

Cemetery Details

Oak Hill Cemetery

Memorial Dr.
Griffin, GA 30223

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 5. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church - Griffin
1401 Maple Drive
Griffin, GA 30224

Service

APR 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church - Griffin
1401 Maple Drive
Griffin, GA 30224

Tribute Wall

PE

“ *Ping & Eric purchased the Divine Light for the family of Mavis S. Johnson.* ”



Ping & Eric - April 02, 2025 at 09:36 PM

PC

“ *Ping C. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mavis S. Johnson.* ”

Ping C. - April 02, 2025 at 09:13 PM

JS

“ *Celindy I am so sorry about your mom. May God wrap his loving arms around the family during this difficult time.* ”

Jenny Cowan Smith - April 02, 2025 at 08:50 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mavis S. Johnson.* ”



April 02, 2025 at 06:54 PM

LJ

“ Love Joell and Ray ,Jessica, Randy,and Jennie purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Mavis S. Johnson.



Love Joell and Ray ,Jessica, Randy,and Jennie - April 02, 2025 at 05:34 PM

LJ

“ Love Joell and Ray ,Jessica, Randy,and Jennie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mavis S. Johnson.

Love Joell and Ray ,Jessica, Randy,and Jennie - April 02, 2025 at 05:34 PM

TH

“ I had the opportunity to meet Mrs. Mavis and Mr. Jack at her church and also sit with Mr. Jack for a short period of time but she was one of the most sweetest people I have ever met. R I P Mrs. Mavis.



Terrie Hunt - April 02, 2025 at 02:28 PM

SJ

“ Mavis’s presence was larger than life. She was more than a sister in law to us. She was our sister. So many precious memories of our times together. Prayers for Jack, Celindy, Glenn and all who loved our “Sis” Mavis. Rest in please, Mavis, you blessed us more than we can ever say. With love and sympathy. Little brother Harold and Sis Sandi Johnson!

Sandi Johnson - April 02, 2025 at 01:46 PM