



Jo Ann Kachadurian Turner

December 7, 1931 - May 13, 2021

Jo Ann Kachadurian Turner was the only daughter of Krekor and Joel Kachadurian, born 7 December 1931 in Chattanooga, TN. Remarkable from the first, she excelled in ballet as a young girl, and she graced a number of local stages with her dancing. As a student at Chattanooga Central High School, Jo Ann shared her Latin textbook one day with a boy named Charlie — and they would rarely be parted for the rest of her life. Her mother wished for her to continue pursuing dance, but Jo Ann was always one to choose her own path; she wanted to start her family, so she married Charles Turner on 29 July 1950 outside his sister's house in Memphis, TN. Always a practical and witty woman, she would joke that the ceremony took place outside the bathroom window, also referred to as a “garden wedding.”

Charlie's naval career took the young couple to Hawaii, then to Washington, DC; by the time they returned to Memphis in 1954, they had already welcomed precious babies Alison Beth and Laurie Faith. Though they lived in a house “not much larger than a crackerbox,” Jo Ann began her tradition of hosting Sunday dinners for a dozen or more people, which would occasionally become stand-up affairs. Generations of family and friends were blessed by her cooking; all were welcome, and no one would leave hungry.

Like her father before her, Jo Ann was a skilled craftsperson. She had been surrounded by Krekor's handiwork as a child, his business being the repair of oriental rugs. Though he never spoke much of “the old country,” she always knew the strong smell of the plant dyes and the dedicated motions of his hands, as he instilled in her the industry and resilience of his Armenian spirit. Though she did not take up Krekor's particular trade, her capabilities were boundless as her determination. She sewed, smocked, and crocheted prolifically. She could tile a floor and rewire a lamp. The stain could always be removed, the recipe perfected, the appliance repaired, the cake decorated, the wall painted; where she applied herself, she succeeded. “God gave us hands for good reason,” she would say. Krekor died when she was young, but his spirit remained with her, just as his needlepoint hung on the wall.

While she led and nurtured her growing family, and cared for her mother throughout her life, Jo Ann's indomitable spirit also led her to work outside the home. She served as Executive Assistant at prominent accounting firm Ernst & Ernst, her career there spanning 35 years. As in all things, she surely commanded respect, both for herself and for the secretaries under her leadership. This was not lost on her daughters. Alison went on to become a Certified Public Accountant herself, Laurie to be a community leader serving our immigrant and refugee population, and both loving mothers with generous hearts. "My daughters never cease to amaze me," Jo Ann recently said. "Can they really be mine?" But of course, she'd taught them well.

When she retired in 1991, Jo Ann may have entered the busiest phase of her life. She cared endlessly for each of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, loving each one uniquely in the way that we needed. She was the listener, the defender, the mender, the provider, the advisor, the confidant — our matriarch, our home. She shaped each of us, and we treasure her spirit; her strength and her laughter resound in us still.

Jo Ann and Charles were nearing their 71st wedding anniversary when the Lord took her unto Himself on 13 May 2021. Her devoted husband salutes her memory, and her children rise up and call her blessed.

Surviving are her loving husband Charles, daughters Alison Hodges (Charles) and Laurie Graves Morris (David), granddaughters Rachel Jones (Austin), Sarah Graves, Kathryn Kilboy (Jim), Kilby Yarbrough (David), and Chasity Nguyen, grandsons Cory Cotham, Jonathan Graves, and Curt Cotham, great-granddaughters Bea Cotham and Annie Jones, and great-grandson Nathan Jones.

The family will receive relatives and friends on Tuesday, May 18 from 11:00 am until the time of the memorial service at 12:00 pm at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 5296 Park Avenue in Memphis. There will be a graveside service at 1:00 pm at Memorial Park Cemetery, 5668 Poplar Avenue.

Events

MAY 18 **Visitation** 11:00AM - 12:00PM

Christ the King Lutheran Church
5296 Park Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

MAY 18 **Memorial Service** 12:00PM

Christ the King Lutheran Church
5296 Park Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

MAY 18 **Graveside Service** 01:00PM

Memorial Park Cemetery
5668 Poplar Ave, Memphis, TN, US, 38119

Comments



“ Dear Charles, Aloha my brother - What a blessing you and Jo Ann are to me! Those casual remarks, Jo Ann made while reading the newspaper, way back in May 1990 "Charles - I think we're going to get to know this young man" epitomised what I appreciated about her - She was spiritually very perceptive and yet o-so-non-plussed in practically living out her Christian faith. How can I thank you both enough? Your hospitality and your deep love when you opened up your home to me has never been forgotten. God alone knows the debt that I owe you both and other dear Memphians for your care and support. If ever I hear any unkind words being spoken about your country, I honestly can't help myself... a deep well of memories gushes out and I retell and I relive the kindness and love that you all showed me there in Memphis. Such generous, such precious and such happy memories of caring, good people. Jo Ann epitomised those qualities. When ever I think of Memphis I can smell the awakening heat of summer, I can hear the insect chorus of the night, I can feel a breaking humid thunderstorm. I also remember your home and your guest bedroom, I remember Jo Ann's rocking chair and her many crafts hanging on the walls, Charles your beloved wife is now home, I miss her already, but I am looking forward to the time when we will all share our interconnected rooms in our eternal Mansions there in glory - we have a lot of catching up to do.

Arohanui, Andrew, Ana, Charlotte, Peata, Iona, Solomon and Henare

Please pass on our love to the whole family: Alison, Laurie, Rachel, Sarah, Kathryn, Kilby, Chastity, Cory, Jonathan and Curt and the Great grandies who are as yet unmet, and all the many friends and out-laws and in-laws and 'the many other hangers on' (of which I was once one).

Andrew Panoho - July 14, 2021 at 07:24 AM



“ Jo Ann and I met probably 40 years ago. She was a kind lady and I sat with her on the bus going downtown while she smocked. She was one of the most gifted ladies I ever met when it comes to needle work. She made the most beautiful keepsakes for wedding attire for her girls and inside was a date for each event as best I can remember. Such beautiful garments, She helped me smock matching outfits with Noah's Ark on each for my little Daughter and my son , As time went on my first granddaughter wore the dress and later on I was blessed with another granddaughter and a grandson. So as they grew they too wore the two outfits. Each time I would be sure my precious friend got pictures of the children in the outfits that she had such an interest in helping me make. Years went by but I always remembered her kindness to a young mother on the bus. I also was invited to her home and met dear Charlie. Such a kind family Together she helped me several other smocked items for the children. I loved that lady and loved that beautiful smile. We had texted in April and I was in prayer for she and Charlie. On May 3 I had texted her and didn't hear back I should have followed up but you know we always look back and realize what we should have done She was a great friend to me and always treasure the friendship. My journey through life was blessed to have had her example to walk by. What a blessing she was to me . God blessed me when I met dear Jo Ann

I know you all will miss her but we are blessed as believers to know that we will meet again. We don't lose that which we know where they are. She will always remain in our hearts. I will miss our correspondence. I love you all

Love Kitty Carpenter
561 Waring Rd
Memphis, Th 38122
901-292-6951 feel free to call on me if I can do anything

kitty carpenter - May 21, 2021 at 07:42 PM



“ Jo Anne was so much Loved by all of us at Ernst and Ernst. She was our mom too. Kind, sweet, caring, and supportive to us in whatever we had going on at the time. We just loved her so and she loved us too.

Most Respectfully,

The Ricky Leighs

Rick and Kathy

131 West Valley St.

Hernando, Mississippi, 38632

901 619 2704



Thericky Leighfamily - May 17, 2021 at 05:08 PM