



Emma Jo Choate

August 26, 1926 - August 6, 2021

Emma Jo Evans Choate (JoJo) passed away on Friday, August 6, 2021, at her home in Lawrenceville, Georgia. She was 94 years old. She lived a long joyful life. Emma Jo was preceded in death by her husband of 23 years, Herbert Taylor Choate, nine siblings, and their spouses. She is survived by three daughters: Deborah Choate Shepherd (Donald) of Madison Heights, Michigan; Beverly Choate Dowdy (Kenneth) of Lawrenceville, Georgia; and Kimberly Choate Thames (Ted) of Lawrenceville, Georgia. She had six grandchildren: Taylor Lee Shepherd (Delaney) of New Orleans, Louisiana; Emilie Shepherd Rohrbach (Dale) of Madison Heights, Michigan; Christopher Dowdy (Lauren) of Dallas, Texas; Trevor Dowdy (Lara) of Austin, Texas; Joshua Thames (Kaitlyn) of Duluth, Georgia; and Katherine Thames Clayton (William) of Nashville. She is also survived by ten great-grandchildren: Nitaawe, Odessa, and Casio Shepherd; Sadie, Eric, and Evan Rohrbach; Silas and Abraham Dowdy; Jonas Thames and Liam Clayton; many nieces and nephews; and hundreds of friends across the country.

Born Emma Jo Evans on August 26, 1926, in Dardanelle, Arkansas, she was the youngest of ten of the "yours, mine, and ours" family of her father Prince Albert Evans (Al) and mother, Lettie Brown Evans. She was baptized at the Dyer Church of Christ in Dyer, Arkansas. She graduated in 1946 from Alma High School, proud to have played basketball with the Alma Airedales.

While working as a switchboard operator at Southwestern Bell in Fort Smith, Arkansas, she met Herbert Taylor Choate (Herb), a Cherokee and World War II Navy veteran from Bunch, Oklahoma. They married on November 24, 1947, in Indianapolis, Indiana. She gave birth on her twenty-second birthday to her first child, Deborah Jane (Debi). In 1952, the family moved to suburban Detroit, near Emma Jo's close-knit family members who migrated from Arkansas to work in the automotive factories. She gave birth to Beverly in 1953 and Kimberly in 1956. Emma Jo and her family became active members of the Van Dyke Church of Christ in Warren, Michigan.

Through the decades, Emma Jo and Herb and the girls enjoyed rich relationships with her extended family while living in the same neighborhood on Ford Street, located near Automobile Street, in Warren, Michigan.

Emma Jo went to work in 1966 at the Automobile Club of Michigan (AAA) first as a switchboard operator, then as a travel counselor, quickly becoming a supervisor.

In November of 1970, her beloved Herb died suddenly from a heart attack one fall evening. She grieved deeply, but moved ahead, fired by her deep faith in Christ, building a life of power and joy.

In a short hiatus from AAA, she worked from 1974 to 1976 at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, as a dorm supervisor and the Director of Housing. There she enjoyed getting to know hundreds of students, attending College Church of Christ, sponsoring the cheerleaders, and co-sponsoring the Ko Jo Kai Social Club.

In 1976 she returned to Michigan again working for AAA as a Branch Supervisor. Over the years, she served stints at the Kalamazoo, Warren, Birmingham, Hamtramck, and Royal Oak offices. She was delighted to be an

engaged grandmother to Taylor and Emilie Shepherd. She loved the fellowship of the Rochester Church of Christ for a season, eventually returning as a member to the Van Dyke Church of Christ. She hosted a young professionals Bible study for over a decade. Emma Jo became known as "JoJo" during this era.

In 1993 JoJo retired from AAA. In the fall of 1994, she moved to Roswell, Georgia, residing with Ken and Bev Dowdy. She worked part-time for the AAA branch in Marietta, Georgia for a few years. She became grandmother extraordinaire to Christopher and Trevor Dowdy and Joshua and Katherine Thames. She supported their activities at Greater Atlanta Christian School and frequently enjoyed filling in at the switchboard at the school.

While living in Roswell, she served with enthusiasm at East Cobb Church of Christ. For just short of two years, she moved to Memphis with Ken and Bev Dowdy and attended the White Station Church of Christ. They moved back to Georgia, and since 2008, JoJo has lived in Gwinnett County and loved volunteering at the church office, worshipping, and serving others with the Campus Church in Norcross.

Through all of her roles and even as she had a great career, all who knew her can affirm Emma Jo Choate's vocation was to love God and to love others.

Burial will be in a private family graveside service at Cadillac Memorial Gardens next to her late husband, Herbert Choate. The family is planning a memorial service that will be livestreamed this evening, Friday, August 27 at 7:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. It will be available indefinitely as a YouTube link.

<https://youtu.be/XbcIIW992K8>

Should friends desire, memorial contributions may be made to Georgia Agape, a family and children services organization. Georgia Agape
3094 University Drive
Suite 200
Atlanta, Georgia 30341 or

- Go online at www.GeorgiaAgape.org or Text "GiveAgape" to 1-888-364-GIVE (4483). In the Fund dropbox choose "Jo Choate Memorial."

Tribute Wall

BH

“ Every memory of Jo Jo is filled with love, joy and her incredible smile. She brought joy just walking into a room. She will live in my and my children's heart forever. A most beautiful soul. I hope she and my Mom meet up in our Savior's home. With lots of love, hugs and prayers for the family.

Beverly Hollifield - August 31, 2021 at 02:59 PM

BB

“ Emma Jo loved me all my life. I will miss her but I am a better person because she lived. May her family and friends find comfort knowing that she was loved far beyond their circle. Jo made a big difference in this world.

Beverly Birdwell Blair - August 25, 2021 at 11:54 AM



“ Lesley Koehn lit a candle in memory of Emma Jo Choate



Lesley Koehn - August 25, 2021 at 11:27 AM

MF

“ I don't have a specific memory of JoJo. I just know that when she entered a room, light came in with her. She was always joyful, always happy and always a delight. I've always thought she had in her the spirit of a peacemaker and seeing her was always refreshing. As I've not seen her for quite a while I've already been missing her smile,... she smiled with her whole face,...eyes and all. I'm grateful to have crossed paths with her. I don't know if heaven delivers emails and such but JoJo I wish you an amazing time in your new home.

Manu Florescu - August 23, 2021 at 10:46 AM



“ "Mama Choate" was one of the Michigan Christian Youth Camp counselors in my cabin the first time I attended at age 14 in the 1960s. She greeted me with a loving, maternal graciousness that set my fears to rest and made me feel welcomed. Over the years since then, anytime I saw her I always felt the hospitality of Jesus in her smile. I'm glad she gets to freely enjoy His welcome now, but she will be missed here on earth.

With love,

Diane Hatcher Kilmer

Diane Kilmer - August 22, 2021 at 01:21 PM

JB

“ Jo was a gracious woman filled with the joy of the Lord. Her love of her precious family (including her church family) was only surpassed by her love of God. Her tenacity in never giving up on praying for a certain person or situation regardless of how long it took the answer to be clear, even years, is indelibly etched in my memory. She said pray, pray, pray, and our timing is not God's timing. Her gentle, loving spirit shined out in her warm smile as she would greet you. My husband and I are richly blessed to have known her.

*Till we meet again dear Jo,
Ancel & Judy*

Judy Buchanan - August 14, 2021 at 11:09 PM

CC

“ *Hi Girls
I have nothing but sweet memories of this wonderful woman
- I started working at AAA like January of 1970 and I was there with her when Herb was found..... She has been thru it and came out every time with a smile and joy and peace in her heart.
I hope she saves a seat for me in the throne room ;) God Bless
Cindy Carlson*

CINDY CARLSON - August 13, 2021 at 05:48 PM

GL

“ *JoJo was indeed a very special person to her family and so many others. We were blessed to know how. Praying for your comfort during this time.*



Gwen Ligon - August 13, 2021 at 02:32 PM

GS

“ To all of Emma Jo’s Loving Family,It isn’t very often that someone like our “Emmer Jo” comes along.....she set such a great example for those of us to try and follow....she was pure joy to be around,and will be truly missed....but I feel sure she is enjoying being in the company of our Heavenly Father.....our love, Gunther and Jane Schlender

Gunther and Jane Schlender - August 12, 2021 at 10:25 AM

WE

“ I first met Aunt Jo when I married her nephew, Gordon, in 1988, she took me in her arms and welcomed me into the family. Every time I was with her after that she filled me with love. She was a beautiful, Christian lady and will be greatly missed but she's with the Lord now and spreading love.

Wanda Evans - August 11, 2021 at 10:31 AM

JH

“ Jo always showed her love for other people in the sweetest way. Heaven is rejoicing for sure!
Janet Hicks

janet hicks - August 11, 2021 at 09:05 AM

PJ

“ Mrs. Choate was such a sweet lady. My parents knew her from Detroit. She was my dorm Mother my junior year at Harding University. My husband had classes with her daughter Beverly. So sorry to hear she has passed.

Patsy (Billingsley) Jones - August 10, 2021 at 11:55 PM

SR

Jo had a serene and steady light that she shared with all, and you couldn't help being drawn into it whenever you were near her. I had the pleasure of being in Bible study with her for years, and her affectionate and wise contributions blessed us all. She was humble in her sharing, gracious in her loving, and a blessing to us all. We will miss her while rejoicing that she is in our Savior's presence.
Bill and Sunni

Sunni Renn - August 12, 2021 at 09:10 AM

JG

TO the daughters of Emma JO. all you girls did such A wonderful job with your tribute to your mother it was awesome. sad but great words were spoken by every one . we all that knew her loved her very much, especially at the Van Dyke church of christ,-----she always made you feel So special, she will be missed by so many people every one that ever knew her, may she R.I.P. GOD BLESS all you daughters & your family, we love you all. Denzel & Juanita Gross

Juanita Gross - August 28, 2021 at 08:52 PM

ME

“*Tom and I so enjoyed our time together at our home where JoJo "loved" the apple dumplings and ice cream! We were just surprised she could eat that much. I think she and I shared a love of sweets. She was such a lovely, sweet person.*

Melody Eddins - August 10, 2021 at 10:23 PM

SA

“*Sandy Aceto lit a candle in memory of Emma Jo Choate*



Sandy Aceto - August 10, 2021 at 07:31 PM

PL

“ From the time when I was a little girl and friends with Bev at Van Dyke Church of Christ, through my now senior years of life, Emma Jo has been such an incredible gem of a lady with the light of God's love pouring from her heart into countless lives. She and her family have been such a blessing to me for over 60 years, and I look forward to sharing a sweet reunion in Eternity!

Pam Lawson - August 09, 2021 at 11:13 PM

NW

Sending condolences to all of the family. A great reunion awaits us as Christians. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. God bless you! Bill and Nana Whittington

Nana Whittington - August 10, 2021 at 05:55 PM

CS

Jo brought smiles and love to all who spent time with her. She will be missed by family and friends, but I know she is in a happy place. Camille smith

Camille Smith - August 25, 2021 at 06:26 PM

HD

We watched the service and it was so fitting. I couldn't let you know online, but we were watching. It was so fitting!

Hu and Vyneta Davis - August 27, 2021 at 07:36 PM

VD

We've loved you ever since we met you at the Decatur Church! You've been a treasure to us for many years. We'll miss you. Save a place for us and we'll see you again one day.

Vyneta Davis - August 27, 2021 at 07:44 PM