



OBITUARY

Julia Palmer Ashby

OCTOBER 22, 1938 – OCTOBER 3, 2022

IN THE CARE OF

Whitley Garner At Rosehaven Funeral Home

Obituaries sum up lives in dates and milestones, but for Julia Anne Palmer Ashby, 83, it was the extraordinary achievements sandwiched between mundane motherhood that made the greatest impact on her children, family and friends. She was born in Murray, Kentucky on October 22, 1938. The second daughter of Mayo and Mytris (Edwards) Palmer. Her older sister Earlie Mae (Palmer) Terrell was three at the time. Julia was a daddy's girl and Mayo loved his daughters— bringing them treats at night after work. Julia was proud that her father was one of only two black men commissioned to help build landing ship tanks (LSTs) during World War II after the family moved to Evansville, Indiana. The War shaped Julia's life in many ways. She would tell stories of hearing the soldiers march through darkened streets in unison- the eeriness of their precise, thunderous steps. She also smiled brightly as she remembered how she and Earlie Mae ripped up newspapers only to toss them into the air as they skipped through the streets exclaiming "The war is over! The war is over!"

That urgency to report the news only grew. When Julia was a sophomore in high school she began reporting for WSPS, a community radio station for the NAACP. From 1953-1958 she reported on local events. This radio reporting continued through 1960 at Evansville College (now the University of Evansville) where she took deadlines seriously, even stopping at pay phones to call in stories. She also made history herself when Evansville's schools were integrated. She was no longer bused to an all-black school, but became one of the first African Americans to integrate Bosse High School. Julia also helped integrate the local Sun Oil Company and Alcoa Warrick Operations in Evansville.

Julia attended college in Evansville for two years, then transferred to Indiana University in Bloomington where she received her bachelors in business. She married James Howard Ashby on April 16, 1967 after eloping to Niagara Falls. After a few years with IBM she took time off for her children, James Howard Ashby II of Evansville Indiana and Kim (Ashby) MacColeman of Douglasville, Georgia. The family eventually settled in South Bend, Indiana where Julia was an active member of Donmoyer Church of Christ. She also began teaching young people secretarial skills as they pursued their GEDs. She believed strongly in developing the whole person; to do whatever the student needed to grow and develop.

Julia was also active in PSI, Professional Secretaries International, helping to organize the South Bend chapter; and she was ecstatic to be awarded the Advisor of the Year. She also was named Woman of the Year from the South Bend YMCA. Typing was her life in many ways, and she worked tirelessly to improve her skills. In her prime, she could type more than 90 words per minute. She used this skill to work multiple jobs, including teaching herself medical transcription in order to provide for her family. For years Julia taught students during the day then would transcribe charts and letters into the wee hours of the morning. In addition to her broadcast background, she had a passion for learning, reading and writing. She was a professional and did not suffer careless mistakes or lazy inaccuracies.

Music and missions added new textures to her life. Instead of creeping gingerly into her golden years, for five years Julia belted out classical songs as a proud member of the Evansville Philharmonic Chorus. Her favorite event was the Peppermint Pops at Christmas time. Her love of the Lord took her overseas-three times to Sibiu, Romania to teach young people English using the Bible. She also traveled to Honduras after Hurricane Mitch to help the area recover. She even worked (pestered) the airline to ship their supplies as humanitarian aid, rather than charging the volunteers regular prices.

There are so many other talents and awards that Julia received. She had a marvelous, resonate speaking and singing voice and used it to share God's Word on the radio and to the blind. In all she did, her heart was her greatest gift and motivator. She truly focused on her family. An angsty teenager was no match for her hugs and tough talks. She was silly, often breaking into

song or dance. Her favorite color was yellow, but pink took over once she became a breast cancer survivor. 83 years summed up in a few words we call an obituary, however, her legacy lives on in her children, James and Kim, in her grandchildren Aidan MacColeman (14) and Liam MacColeman (9) and her extended patchwork of friends and family in Christ. There will never be another like her.

Preceding her in death were her parents, Mayo and Myrtis (Edwards) Palmer; her sister, Earlie Palmer Terrell; and the father of her children, James Ashby.

Those left to cherish her memory are her son, James Ashby II of Evansville, Indiana; her daughter, Kimberly Ashby MacColeman; and her two grandchildren, Aidan MacColeman and Liam MacColeman.

A memorial service is planned for Monday, October 10, 2022 at 1:00 PM at the West Metro Church of Christ, 4550 Hiram Sudie Road, Hiram, Georgia 30141.

Thoughts and condolences to the family may be shared online at www.whitleygarner.com.

Whitley-Garner at Rosehaven Funeral Home is honored to be entrusted with the services of Julia Anne Palmer Ashby.

FAMILY

Mayo Palmer Father (deceased)

Myrtis Palmer Mother (deceased)

Earlie Palmer Terrell Sister (deceased)

James Ashby Father of her Children (deceased)

James Ashby II Son

Kimberly Ashby MacColeman Daughter

Aidan MacColeman Grandchild

Liam MacColeman Grandchild