



Josephine Goss

January 6, 1930 - October 6, 2020

Jo Goss passed away Oct. 6, 2020 in her home in Guntersville, AL of natural causes. She was 90.

Born in Preston, AL January 6, 1930, Martha Josephine Starnes was the oldest of two sisters, Jane and Lolly. Her parents, Bessie Lou Bishop and Hardin Perkins Stearnes (later Starnes), lived in a house with no running water or electricity (before TVA). The windmill generated a battery to listen to the radio and a well cooled their milk. Her earliest memory was that of a kitchen fire where mother yelled for help to the CCC boys working nearby. Later, the family moved to Claysville when she was a young child. She once recalled spending the night in her aunt's house the middle of Highway 431 due to the impending flooding of the Tennessee River. To get out of chores, she would hide away with her book on the roof of the hen house.

In 1948, Jo graduated from high school in Guntersville, then earned her teaching diploma at State Teacher's College in Jacksonville, AL. She taught junior high school in Albertville for 2 years, that is, until she was fired due to politics - her father backed the wrong candidate for school superintendent. Panama City Beach, FL beckoned with higher pay and sandy beaches. It was there she met her future husband at the local drive-in. Lt. Bruce Goss, a pilot at Tyndall Air Force base, hailed from upstate New York. They married in 1955 moved around for 7 years before settling in Chattanooga and later St. Paul.

She was active in her children's ex-curricular musical activities, including sewing costumes and lugging drum sets around in the family station wagon. Her social life was playing bridge with her friends.

Upon her divorce In 1987, Jo returned to her hometown. She joined the Methodist Church (GFUMC), delivered meals-on-wheels and traveled: North to Canada, South to Brazil and all over the USA but her favorite trips were the Broadway shows in NYC every couple of years. In 1997, she was elected a board member of the Guntersville Museum upon which she proudly served for 23 years.

In the twilight of her years, home bound due to the pandemic, Jo became technical savvy. The world entered her home through social media, e-mail, audio books, streaming apps and video calls.

She is survived by her children, Jennifer DeSouza of Miami and John Goss of Guntersville, 2 grandchildren Nicole and Lorren, 6 great-grandchildren and her sister Ellen (Lolly) Cole of Tehachapi, CA. In lieu of a memorial service there will be a private family gathering whereupon her ashes will be gently tossed into the waters of the great bend of the Tennessee River -the same which carried her ancestors down by flatboats in the early 1800's.

Jo wanted to let her all her far-flung friends know that her life was enhanced by their support and friendship. If you treasure her memories and would like to contribute, her request is to consider a donation, be it however small, to the Guntersville Museum.

Tribute Wall

CW

“ *Jenny and John: I am sorry to hear of the loss of your mother, Jo. May her memory always be a blessing to you.*

Your family is part of my first remembered neighborhood! My name is Carolyn Wartinbee, and my parents were Ceil and John (both now deceased). You may also remember my younger sister Jane and/or younger brother Thomas.

Our parents knew one another in Milwaukee in the very early 60's, as in-building neighbors in apartments near 60th and Oklahoma Avenue. We children were like our Dad, all blondes, while mother had black hair and wore eyeglasses. For further memory reference I and my brother had rather large ears that stuck out, just like our Dad.

I recall our parents getting together to watch and "Sing Along With Mitch" on the television. I also fondly recall your mother's southern accent made the name Jenny sound like Ginny. Our first nightly childhood prayers, said aloud, would begin "God Bless Jenny and John-John, Jo and Bruce..."

Somewhere in my home is a black-and-white photo of 5 year old long-haired Jenny Goss, and 2 year old me, curling our hair with bobby pins in front of a small mirror at the kitchen table. And I vividly remember the day that photo was taken!

I know our parents corresponded until the middle 1980s, because my mother's old address book lists their 1985 address in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. I also remember when Mom told me Jenny got married.

Your mother Jo's obit reads of a life well-lived, with loving memories made and shared.

Carolyn Wartinbee - May 17, 2021 at 07:50 PM