



## Mr. Joe Boyd Ezell Jr.

January 2, 1925 - July 20, 2015

As a boy, he was known as “Sonny.”

Joe was born in Talladega, Alabama on January 2, 1925, son of Ella McCall Ezell and Joe Boyd Ezell. He grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, going to Central Park Elementary School, and graduated from Phillips High School, where he was class Valedictorian. Upon graduation in 1943, he was immediately inducted into the Army at Fort Hood, Texas. He served in Europe and saw combat in eastern France, where he earned a Campaign Medal with one Bronze Star.

On return from WWII, he attended Birmingham Southern College, where he met Daphna Wilda Barnes, the future Mrs. Joe Ezell. He and Daphna moved on to Tuscaloosa, Alabama where he earned a Masters Degree in History, specializing in Tudor England. He married Daphna in 1949, and their son David was born in 1956, followed by his daughter Joanna in 1958.

After serving as the University Center Director in Gadsden Alabama and also for a time at the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, he began working at Georgia State University in 1963. As part of the administration at Georgia State, he played a key role in helping the institution grow from a night school with some 3000 students to a major urban university with some 25,000 students featuring a law school and a ground-breaking College of Urban Life.

Joe also founded the Self Study effort at Georgia State, a pioneering and successful attempt to institutionalize self-improvement into the lifeblood of the University.

Joe is survived by his wife Daphna, his daughter Joanna her husband Jim Pope, with their children Alan, Ryan with his wife Chaney their daughter Reagan, daughter Chelsea and Jordan, as well as his son David and David's partner David Fitzgerald. Joe's two cousins, William Stockdale of Victoria, Canada and Sara Elizabeth Craft of Birmingham, Alabama, now represent the last surviving members of their generation.

Services will be at Northside Chapel in Roswell at 3:00PM on Friday afternoon, July 24, 2015, with visitation starting at 2:00PM. In lieu of flowers, the family recommends that donations be made to the Ezell History Endowment at the Georgia State University Library.

# Cemetery Details

## Northside Chapel Crematory

12050 Crabapple Rd  
Roswell, GA 30075

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 24. 2:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors & Crematory  
12050 Crabapple Road  
Roswell, GA

## Memorial Service

JUL 24. 3:00 PM (ET)

Northside Chapel Funeral Directors & Crematory  
12050 Crabapple Road  
Roswell, GA

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Joe Boyd Ezell Jr.*

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October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM

BL

“ I was Secretary to Joe B Ezell, Assistant Vice President, in 1967-68 at then Georgia State College, which with his leadership, then became Georgia State University. I even now remember going into his office clearing a path through the cigar smoke to take dictation/shorthand from him! I was a young 17 year old, wet behind my ears, and Mr. Ezell was like a father to me in those early days of my career.

*In February 1968 he attended my Wednesday night wedding, snow and all, in Podunk Gwinett County, GA and gave me valuable advice and guidance in my early married life. While my new husband was away at Ft. Bending, Ga. attending basic training, Mr. Ezell gave me a ride to work every day in his white Chevy Corvair! He didn't want me riding the Atlanta buses in the dark dead of winter alone.*

*We sat through many Board of Regents meetings with Georgia State VP, Dr. Suttles, President Noah Langdale, etc., as we tried to develop University level plans for Georgia State---all the while taking shorthand minutes of these very important plans. Mr. Ezell was right in the midst of this development and I am proud to have worked for and with him throughout those days. I was so scared of being the minutes taker (I was only 17-18 years old!) but Mr. Ezell steadily guided me and gave me confidence I could do the job...and I did, thanks to him!*

*Funny anecdote-- My new husband never wanted to follow another car even if it was going the speed limit, he always had to pass the vehicle ahead! I was complaining to Mr. Ezell about my husband's habit of doing this when Mr. Ezell calmly said, "Beky, go tell Joe (my husband) THE WORLD IS ROUND--SOMEBODY'S ALWAYS GOING TO BE AHEAD OF HIM and to get used to it?"*

*Mr. Ezell was always conscious in those days he didn't have his Doctorate and it bothered him. I was delighted to see he finally achieved his dream.*

*My deep and sincere condolences to Mr. Ezell's family. I was privileged to have worked with him and even now at 71 years old, as you see, I still remember him fondly.*

*Beky Lord  
Cleveland, Ga*

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**Beky Lord** - September 19, 2020 at 02:38 PM

CK

“ *I thought of a couple of funny things I wanted to share. When Chelsea talked about how Papa would have snacks for her at her events, it made me think of when I would go to his place to help him. He would always have a bottle of Coke and 2 Hershey Nugget pieces sitting on the desk for me. It was fun and very sweet of him. If he forgot he would "rush" to the kitchen and get them and talk about how he was falling down on his job!*

*One time I was driving him somewhere and I was singing along to the radio. Of course Joe couldn't hear very well but all of a sudden he burst into song, something from the 40's I think, just to show me up! He knew the whole song and sang it for me!! :-)*

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**Constance Keith** - July 24, 2015 at 04:34 PM

BS

“ *Sending our sincere condolences and thinking of happy memories of our visit in Victoria.  
Love from Beth, Duane and family*

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**Beth Stockdale** - July 23, 2015 at 04:55 PM

WS

“ Dear Daphna, David, Joanna and family;  
Cousin Joe was like a brother to me and I loved him dearly. He will  
be greatly missed and fondly remembered.  
With love, Bill Stockdale

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**William Stockdale** - July 23, 2015 at 04:37 PM

CK

“ I looked forward to seeing Joe every month and spending some  
time with him. He loved it when he had a good joke to tell me and  
we would laugh and laugh! He loved to forward funny e-mails or  
sweet ones about pets to me.

Joanna, thank you for introducing me to your parents.

I will miss him terribly.

Love and Prayers,

Constance

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**Constance Keith** - July 23, 2015 at 03:11 PM

JD

“ To know Dr. Ezell is to know a wonderfully kind man ready and  
willing to lend a hand, share a positive word and offer support to  
help you achieve your goals. I am blessed to know him both in his  
work at Georgia State and at a personal level.

His example of service to his fellow man is easy to follow.

God Bless Dr. Ezell.

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**John Drury** - July 23, 2015 at 08:15 AM

AP

*Dr. Ezell was a kind and genuine man. He always brightened my day with his warm smile. He will be missed. Please know you all are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.*

*God Bless,  
Amanda Plott*

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**Amanda Plott** - July 23, 2015 at 08:50 AM

AT

*We will always be grateful for the times we had with Uncle Joe and the Ezells. We especially honour Joe's strong sense of family, and his many efforts to keep us connected across distances and years- through those special visits, emails, simple jokes, and of course, those marvellous stories that will continue to be told and retold.*

*We will always remember him so fondly.*

*love, Anne Tower (nee Stockdale) and Mark Tower*

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**Anne Tower** - July 24, 2015 at 11:50 AM