

Muriel Ellen Welch "Midge" Evans, born in Brooklyn New York, 17 June 1920, lived a long and vigorous life devoted to family and church and enriched by a passion for travel, photography and sewing. She was a mother, teacher, photographer and businesswoman and will be fondly remembered by the family she shaped and the people she influenced.

She was married to Henry Harper Evans for 65 years, since 14 April 1946. Despite shortages and rationing, and the fact that the groom arrived back in port less than two days before the wedding, it was a beautiful ceremony and reception in New York City. The couple drove all the way to the west coast and back on their honeymoon, where she daringly wore slacks.

A son born in 1965 completed a pack of five children over twelve years. Midge always said "Be careful what you pray for; I prayed for children and got five." She was devoted to her children, instilling in them her love of learning, spontaneity and an expectation that one makes the most of God given talents. Always ready to entertain and welcome guests to her home, she also took pleasure in a cup of tea and a book.

Six months after her birth, Midge was enrolled in Sunday School at the East End Baptist Church. From that start, *Midge maintained a faithful presence in the Baptist Church until the end of her days. She taught Sunday school for 71 years, first in Woodhaven New York, then at First Baptist in Forest Park GA, then for over 40 years at First Baptist of Griffin GA. She will be dearly missed by the Esther Class at First Baptist – "Her Girls."* Midge's love of family and friends was a driver for her love of photography. She received her first camera from her father at age 13; it had 6" negatives and six shots on a roll. Her lifelong hobby, some might say obsession, would result in hundreds of photo albums, meticulously labeled negatives, slides, movies, and collections of historic family pictures. She distributed photos widely in the cards and letters she sent, maintaining ties between those she loved regardless of the distances between them.

The honeymoon trip was the beginning of a life-time of travels that took Midge and Harper to most of the 50 states from Alaska to Florida, as well as Canada, and Mexico, to Australia and the South Pacific, across Europe and Russia. A trip to the beach was always in order and she was ready to explore new places with a quick "I'll start packing now". Every trip is documented in pictures and the memories of the friends and family visited along the way.

Midge believed in education. She won academic awards throughout her early schooling and set the standard for women of her era by completing a Degree in English at Queen's college and then honored as one of the few women of her day to attend Columbia University where she completed a Master's Degree in Psychology in 1943. After graduation she worked assessing the skills of women entering the wartime economy to place them in appropriate jobs. She was a lifelong fixture in her local libraries, where she took home stacks of murder mysteries to be replaced by another stack week on week. When there wasn't a library, she help to start one as the co-founder of the public library in Forest Park, starting the collection in a room behind the roller rink.

Midge paired her intellect with abundant creative talents. She was an avid pianist and sang with the Decatur Choral Club in the 1950s. She loved the theater; her first date with Harper was to see *Oklahoma!* and thereafter she always tried to see a show on Broadway when visiting her hometown. After making clothing for 50 years she put her love of fabric to work. In 1983 Midge and daughter Melanie opened Creative Costumes where for 25 years she designed costumes for theater, ballet and special events and amassed a library of more than 4000 patterns.

In 2010 Midge celebrated her 90th birthday wearing a sparkly tiara, surrounded by extended family and friends. Even at 90 she set a standard for vigor, swimming regularly and walking everywhere she had the chance. She was blessed to be active and alert until the last weeks of her life. Midge passed away in Griffin, Georgia after a short illness on April 15, 2011. She will be sorely missed by her family and community. She is survived by her husband, her five children and twelve grandchildren.