



Gertrude A. Choate

May 18, 1921 - July 18, 2014

Around sunrise on Friday, July 18, 2014, the soul of Gertrude Avant Choate took flight on her celestial journey to her heavenly home. Quietly, while at home, she slipped away from this earthly scene to answer the roll call reserved for the faithful in Christ. Gertrude, the sixth child, was born May 18th, 1921 to the late James and Gertrude Avant of Emporia, Virginia. Gertrude was affectionately known by several names during her lifetime. She was called "Gertie" by her friends and family. She was called "Choate" by her professional colleagues. Her Grandchildren could not pronounce her name so they called her "GaGa." Later in life, Gertrude earned the name "Diva" as she had established herself an independent lady who had beauty, class and style. Her high-fashion style uniquely set her apart from others to that "wig and high heeled shoes." Gertrude obtained her primary education at Greensville County Training School in Emporia, VA. Upon relocating with her sister Bernice Whitehurst to Portsmouth, VA, she completed her secondary education from I.C. Norcom High School in 1939. Gertrude's passion for independence and self-improvement was reflected in her persistent pursuit of continuing her education at Norfolk State University. In 1958, Gertrude graduated from Hampton Institute, now known as Hampton University, where she received Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education. During her 28 years, she taught first, second and fourth grades. Her passion for teaching was demonstrated through her effective teaching and learning programs for every student in her classroom. Her teaching career began at

Riddick Weaver Elementary School. Future teaching positions included Port Norfolk Elementary School and Simonsdale Elementary School until retirement in 1986. As a teenager, Gertrude joined St. James Episcopal Church. Her church activities included the Alter Guild, Choir, Episcopal Church of Women, St Mary's Guild and Outreach Programs. She used her creativeness to maintain the bulletin boards at church.

Gertrude divided her time among numerous organizations throughout her lifetime. She was a charter member of the Delicados, Inc. in Portsmouth, VA. She served on the Board of Directors for the Portsmouth Area Resource Coalition (PARC). Other affiliations included the NAACP, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, and Meals on Wheels. She was especially dedicated to her favorite organization, the Merrymakers Club for 60 years. She served as chairperson of the Club Project Committee. In her leisure, Gertrude enjoyed reading, crossword puzzles and artwork. In her later years, she took great pleasure in chatting with her family and close friends on the phone. She especially enjoyed talking with her sisters, Clarine, Bernice, Wilma, and her special friend Raymond Durant. Left to mourn is her daughter, Janice C. Williams (Jimmy), Portsmouth, VA, Denise Byrd, Virginia Beach, VA, Samuel S. Byrd Jr, Portsmouth, VA, Great-Grandson Brian Brown and numerous nieces and nephews, all of whom will miss their beloved Diva Aunt Gertrude and a host of other relatives and friends.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 22. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

J.T. Fisher Funeral Services
1248 N. George Washington Hwy.
Chesapeake, VA 23323
(757) 487-3700
info@jtfisherfuneralservices.com
<https://www.jtfisherfuneralservices.com>

Service

JUL 22. 11:00 AM (ET)

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Tribute Wall

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“ *To the Choate Family:
My prayers are with you. Mrs Choate was my
second grade teacher. I will always remember
her. She was always so pleasant, never
raised her voice. She had such grace. May
she rest in peace.*

Karen (Collins) Savage

Karen (Collins) Savage - July 29, 2014 at 12:17 PM



PB

“ *Dear Family:
I may not be at the homegoing but you have my best wishes for a
peaceable celebration of life.
You all know I have been able to enjoy Ms. Gertrude for many
years. I am just happy none of you, or her, are suffering. All that is
now a thing of the past.
God Bless each and every one of you. See you soon.
Pat Burns*

Pat Burns - July 21, 2014 at 04:33 PM