



## Jean F. Ashby

August 30, 1919 - April 17, 2019

The family of Jean Ashby will have a Private Graveside Service at Geneva Public Cemetery with Pastor Stuart Davis presiding.

Public visitation will be held on Monday, April 22, 2019, from 1:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. with family greeting the public from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. at Farmer & Son Funeral Home in Geneva, Nebraska.

Memorials are to be directed to:

Geneva Fire Department  
C/O Mike Grothe  
600 F St  
Geneva, NE 68361

Fillmore County Hospital Foundation  
1900 F Street  
Geneva, NE 68361

First Congregational United Church of Christ  
906 H Street  
Geneva, NE 68361

Jean F. Ashby was born August 30, 1919 in Council Bluffs, Iowa to Charles B. and Laura May (Mary) Smith Fricke. She passed away on April 17, 2019, at Heritage Crossings Nursing Home in Geneva, Nebraska at the age of 99 years 7 months and 18 days. Jean's father was a pharmacist and taught at Creighton University. In 1921, the family moved to Columbus, Nebraska where her father bought an interest in a drug store.

Jean attended grade school and high school in Columbus, graduating in 1937. She was a member of the Presbyterian Church, a Girl Scout, president of the German Club and a

member of the Latin Club. She worked on the school newspaper, sang in the chorus and performed in operettas, along with participating in girls' sports where she earned her "C" letter.

From an early age, Jean worked at the family drug store, from soda jerk in high school to assistant manager during WWII (which led to her lifelong obsession with root beer floats.)

After graduating from high school, she attended Doane College in Crete for two years. While at Doane, she was a member of Alpha Lambda Delta Honorary Society and a member of Sigma Tau social sorority, played drums in the all-girl Drum Corp, and was member of the German Language Club.

Jean transferred to Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and graduated in 1941 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Abnormal Psychology (which she later claimed was extremely useful after joining the Ashby family). She joined Alpha Chi Omega sorority. After graduation, Jean was employed with John Nuveen & Co., a municipal bond firm in Chicago, working as a receptionist before promotion to the training department. While living in Chicago, she lived with three other Nebraska girls.

It was in Chicago during the summer of 1942 when her life completely changed after an introduction to Charles Ashby, MD by his cousin Fred, who worked in the same firm as Jean. Charles had started his internship at Wesley Memorial Hospital. A whirlwind courtship ensued that summer, but Charles reported for active duty in the Navy in Washington, DC in September. There, he received his assignment to report to San Francisco to become the ship's doctor for the USS Twining Destroyer. Jean left Chicago and headed home to Columbus to work at the drugstore. Although Charles said that he didn't believe in wartime marriages, by the end of September he phoned Jean (at 2:00 a.m.) and proposed. One week later she bravely caught a train by herself to San Francisco and five days later they were married.

After Charles returned from the Pacific, they were stationed at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, and then posted to the Hastings Ammunition Depot where they lived until his release from duty in 1947. Charles and Jean returned to Fillmore County where Charles began practicing with his father, Dr. Bert, in Fairmont until moving to Geneva where Jean lived the rest of her life.

In 1951, Charles and Jean adopted Sarah and six years later they adopted Jim. She felt very blessed to have them as their beloved children.

Life became exceedingly busy. Charles worked day and night. Jean was active in the Congregational Church, serving as a circle officer, also Kensington Club, PEO, Saddle Club, Bridge Club, Supper Club, and the long running "Pool Party" (a group that met weekly during NU football season). Jean was very active in the Nebraska Women's Medical Auxiliary, developed a babysitting training course, and named "Woman of the Year" by the Auxiliary in 1972.

Jean's main hobby was gardening, with a huge vegetable garden and extensive flowerbeds. Roses were her specialty and she always had 60 to 90 hybrid tea roses in her garden. Jean and Charles were also avid golfers and she served as President of Women's League even winning a few trophies.

Charles and Jean traveled all over the USA for medical meetings, including Hawaii. They also traveled to Mexico and Jamaica. In later years they began to cruise all over the world, including many, many cruises with their children and grandchildren.

Jean was one of the last true matriarchs—the glue that held her family together with dignity and strength of character, a strong will and a deep sense of propriety. She relished her role as a doctor's wife, a mother, a granny, and a great-granny to her Ava Jean. As with all who lived through the depression, she never took anything for granted. She was generous and kind with a very strong faith and a deep sense of duty to her community, giving her time, money, and effort throughout her life. Jean loved filling her beautiful home with art and collectibles and feeding every bird in the county, including a very lucky stray wild turkey that became her pet. Her life was filled with love and laughter. Her wicked sense of humor was legendary, always vigilant on spot patrol, tasting fork, and saltshaker at the ready, and the shout of "that's wretched" whenever it was needed. She will be missed.

Jean was preceded in death by her parents, her sister Mary Kay, and her husband, Charles. She is survived by her daughter, Sarah and husband Tony Sawtell of Santa Fe, New Mexico; son, Jim and wife Janice of Geneva, and grandchildren Katherine and Ed Mirecki, Andrew and Kyla Sawtell with great-granddaughter Ava Jean Sawtell, all of Gig Harbor, Washington; Meredith and Daniel Silvernail of Columbus, Ohio and Charles Ashby of Lincoln; and her sister Doris Corbridge of Naperville, Illinois; and numerous nieces and nephews and their families

# Cemetery

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# Events

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**Geneva Public Cemetery**

Geneva, NE, 68361

**APR Visitation 01:00PM - 08:00PM**

**22**

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Farmer & Son Funeral Home

242 N 10th Street, Geneva, NE, US, 68361

**APR Family Present for Visitation 04:00PM - 06:00PM**

**22**

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Farmer & Son Funeral Home

242 N 10th Street, Geneva, NE, US, 68361

# Comments

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“ To Jean's family,  
I am saddened to learn of Jean's passing. She and my mother, Margaret Prest, were such good friends as young women in Columbus. Mom often talked of her and they stayed in touch until Mom's death four years ago. I am sorry we did not know in time to send a remembrance for her service. My condolences on your loss.

Elizabeth Bundgaard Wicks

Elizabeth Wicks - February 24, 2020 at 10:10 AM

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“ Sarah and Jim, my deepest sympathies. I have so many fond memories of Aunt Jean, Uncle Charles and you both. When we made the annual pilgrimage to Columbus, the highlight was the side trip to Geneva to see you all. Jean filled the house with love and laughter. Such a kind and generous soul.

Dave Carlson - April 27, 2019 at 02:32 PM

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“ 25 files added to the album Ashby Flowers



Farmer & Son Funeral Home - April 23, 2019 at 08:51 AM

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“ Alberto Granados lit a candle in memory of Jean F. Ashby



Alberto Granados - April 22, 2019 at 06:07 PM



“ What a beautiful lady and great smile she had. We always enjoyed visiting with her when she came to Lincoln. Having helped her in the store so many times, we so enjoyed visiting with her. I think the one favorite memory we have of her and Dr Ashby was the time they were in town for a Nebraska football game and they were both riding their scooters. Our front door swung open and they raced to the counter in back to see which one would get there the fastest. We all shared a good laugh over that for many years. Our friendship spanned over 40 years. May peace be with the entire family.

Tom and Mary Wright

Mary K Wright - April 22, 2019 at 12:19 PM

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“ The Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians purchased the Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet for the family of Jean F. Ashby.



Liz Fidone - April 21, 2019 at 10:02 PM

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“ Jim, my sympathy to you and all your extended families. - Nancy (Ward) Hansen



Nancy Hansen - April 21, 2019 at 12:54 PM

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“ Doris Corbridge, Anne and Peter, Tom and Susan purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Jean F. Ashby.



**Doris Corbridge, Anne and Peter, Tom and Susan** - April 20, 2019 at 01:06 PM

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“ Vicki Allgood lit a candle in memory of Jean F. Ashby



**Vicki Allgood** - April 20, 2019 at 02:10 AM

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“ Cindi Andreasen lit a candle in memory of Jean F. Ashby



**Cindi Andreasen** - April 19, 2019 at 07:38 PM

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“ well jean will be able to spend the first of may with her beloved doc..so very sorry for the loss of this remarkable women sympathy to the family  
Dean and Laura Kassik



dean and laura kassik - April 19, 2019 at 11:14 AM

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“ Rhonda Schlick lit a candle in memory of Jean F. Ashby



Rhonda Schlick - April 19, 2019 at 10:49 AM

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“ Jim I am so sorry to hear of your Mom's passing. I have such fond memories of your parents and how they always welcomed us giggling Exeter girls. My deepest sympathies at this time. Paula Kaiser-Asmus

Paula Kaiser-Asmus - April 19, 2019 at 10:46 AM

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“ Prayers of Comfort and Peace to all the Ashby Families of a Dear, Sweet Caring Lady. I remember visits back here with some of you, and I remember fondly, one Summer before my Senior year in Thomson Illinois , I spent some time with you all there, helping in Dr. Charles office, so fun it was. We are connected no matter how far the miles or time gone by. Prayers, Mrs Carolyn (Ashby) Carroll



**Carolyn Carroll** - April 18, 2019 at 03:27 PM

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“ My sincere condolences to Sarah, Jim, and the rest of the family. Jean's obituary really captured who she was and how she lived her life. Although blessed with many years, it's still difficult to say, "Goodbye for now," to a mother and the matriarch of the family. May all your wonderful memories comfort you in your loss.

**Deb Bixby** - April 18, 2019 at 02:39 PM