



Barbara "Joan" Keefer

September 8, 2024

Barbara Joan Keefer, 88, of Roanoke, passed away at 2:00 pm Sunday, September 8, 2024.

Joan would like to let you know that her work here is done. She received a call Sunday September 8th, 2024, a sort of offer you can't refuse, for an appointment from which she will not be returning. This assignment comes with a huge sign-on bonus, a reunion with her husband, "Les", the love of her life, her family and friends she has not seen in a long time. Her new mission takes her to a wonderful place where she will be socializing and reading all sorts of genealogy material and researching the family history of every new person and everyone she will be meeting. She will be busy baking something for everyone to share. Friends, laughter, and love are guaranteed.

Joan was born September 1, 1936, in Youngstown, Ohio, to Roger and Maude Wynkoop Barnt. She graduated from Huntington High School in 1954, and married the love of her life, Lester "Les" Keefer, on October 1, 1954. They were married for 54 years before he received his call April 1, 2009.

Surviving are her son, Lee "Buster" Keefer and partner Karen Jackson, Ft. Wayne, IN; daughter, Lori (Curtis) VanOver, Huntington, IN; From these two children, there are five grandsons, Jason (Jennie) Keefer, Bradley (Brandi Ott) Keefer, Jerin (Megan) Clements, Tyler (Casey) Keefer, and Justin Keefer. One granddaughter, Laura Keefer. Four great grandsons, Braxton and Carter

Keefer, Terin Clements, Tavis Holley, and three great granddaughters Takara Hethcote, Chloe Keefer, and Kristina Wigman round out Joan's family. Also surviving are a special brother-in-law and his wife Harold "Bud" and Charlene "Charlie" Keefer, of Okeechobee, Florida, and bonus son, David Byrd of Craigville, Indiana.

Joan was preceded in death by her husband, parents, a "big brother" Roger Barnt Jr, who died July 8, 1953, a special stepfather Arthur "Woody" Dalrymple, and a bonus son, Max Byrd.

Genealogy was Joan's passion, and she lived it day and night. Nothing escaped her scrutiny when researching a person's family history. She had a memory which knew no bounds.

Joan won numerous awards for her lifetime of work in family research. She was Huntington County Historian for a number of years, she was a member of the Huntington County Historical Society Board for many years, she spent time as a member of the County Courthouse Centennial Committee where she did extensive research on the building of the courthouse, she accepted the Lt. Governor's Hospitality Award and the William C. Heiss family History/Genealogy Award, among others. In 2017, she was chosen as an honoree in Huntington County Honors Class of Outstanding People. Joan had co-authored several books pertaining to Huntington County History. Joan conducted numerous day-long workshops for Genealogy Groups from Grant, Noble, and Wabash counties, she also judged 4-H projects in neighboring counties.

November 2, 2019, the Indiana Room at the Huntington City Township Public Library was renamed THE B. JOAN KEEFER GENEALOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY CENTER in honor of her work and dedication building a room of local history and genealogy.

Many years ago, after promising her husband, Les, that she would only work two years to organize a genealogy and history room at the old Carnegie

Huntington City Library, Joan retired October 2016, after 40 years from the Huntington City-Township Public Library. She began volunteering in the library in 1976 when they were first developing the Indiana Room.

Everyone who knew Joan will remember her favorite saying which is on her stone, "Born a Buckeye, died a Nut."

There will be a burial at Andrews Riverside Cemetery 2:00 pm September 14, 2024, where she will be laid next to her loving Husband.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Bailey-Love Mortuary on September 14, 2024, from 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm.

Preferred memorials to the Huntington City-Township Public Library or Petting Zoo Ocala, in care of Bailey-Love Mortuary, 35 West Park Drive, Huntington, IN, 46750.

Please sign the online guest book at www.baileylove.com.

Bailey-Love Mortuary is honored to serve the family of Barbara Joan Keefer.

Previous Events

Burial

SEP 14. 2:00 PM (ET)

Riverside Cemetery (Andrews)
7351-7399 W. River Rd.
Andrews, IN 46702

Celebration of Life

SEP 14. 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM (ET)

Adkins Bailey-Love Mortuary
35 West Park Drive
Huntington, IN 46750
(260) 356-1710
wecare@baileylove.com
<https://www.baileylove.com>

Tribute Wall

CC

“ I donated some family items back in 2015 and my mother before me, a number of years earlier. Joan was always so helpful, so interested. When I came in, with my son, she remembered my mother because of the jar of funeral cookies. My son and I are coming up to Huntington to visit my parents graves. I was planning on stopping into the Library and looked up Joan, which is how I found that she had died. She will be missed.

Cat Calhoun - August 17, 2025 at 04:56 PM

SB

“ Sandra Bonner lit a candle in memory of Barbara "Joan" Keefer



Sandra Bonner - October 27, 2024 at 12:13 PM

DM

“ Diane M. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara "Joan" Keefer.

Diane M. - September 24, 2024 at 10:09 PM

TS

“ To Joan's family and friends our thoughts and prayers are with you.
Terry and Sue



Terry E Scher - September 15, 2024 at 10:31 PM

JM

“ My sympathy to Joan's family. She helped me get started on my family history 40 years ago at the old Huntington library. She was so helpful and will be missed.

John Myers - September 14, 2024 at 12:00 AM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Barbara "Joan" Keefer.



September 13, 2024 at 06:59 PM

DS

“ David and Tasha Spake planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara "Joan" Keefer.

David and Tasha Spake - September 13, 2024 at 06:59 PM

MA

“ My father and grandfather were born in Andrews, Indiana. For several years I would visit relatives there. During my visits I would spend time researching my family genealogy at the Huntington library. I will always be indebted to Joan for her helpful suggestions and assisting me research information on my family. She was a truly remarkable lady and one so dedicated to genealogy.

Martin Anderson - September 13, 2024 at 05:38 PM

MP

“ Dear Family,
When I saw that Joan passed away, i thought of all the good family memories of her. She will be missed! Thinking of you!
Love,
Mary Jane Perisho

Mary Jane Perisho - September 13, 2024 at 05:11 PM

LA

“ I always loved going into the library to talk with Joan. Not being a real fan of genealogy, she made it fun and very entertaining. A true teacher of her craft, she will be missed.

LauraDillon - September 13, 2024 at 09:28 AM

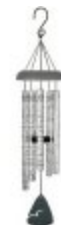
CB

“ I miss Joan. She was such a knowledgeable person, in a delightfully entertaining way. Cheri Bailey

Cheri Bailey - September 11, 2024 at 07:55 AM

LS

“ Lisa Ramos & Greg, Rick & Trish Seals purchased the Serenity Prayer 30" Sonnet for the family of Barbara "Joan" Keefer.



Lisa Ramos & Greg, Rick & Trish Seals - September 11, 2024 at 07:08 AM

LS

“ Lisa Ramos & Greg, Rick & Trish Seals planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Barbara "Joan" Keefer.

Lisa Ramos & Greg, Rick & Trish Seals - September 11, 2024 at 07:08 AM

CW

“ What an amazing person; what a true friend to genealogists and family historians; what a dedicated soul to committed to assisting anyone. . . everyone . . . find their families' stories. So sad for this loss . . . and as her obituary said, so happy so is back with Les. May time and good memories eventually bring peace.

Curt Witcher--ACPL Ft. Wayne - September 10, 2024 at 08:26 PM

BH

“ I'm sorry to hear about Joan's passing. I'll never forget our road trip being mom back to Tennessee in your RV with Lori, she was such a nice person and I know mom really liked her.



Becky Kemp Holmes - September 10, 2024 at 04:34 PM

DD

“ David Dankenbring purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Barbara "Joan" Keefer.



David Dankenbring - September 10, 2024 at 02:04 PM



“ Joan encouraged me so much in my genealogy journey. She was the one who insisted that I research people on my tree from the 1400sm sure they would lead to royals, and she was right. She was sure I could "write up a little something about Andrews", and she was right. She's one of the most unforgettable people I've ever met, and she is missed already.

Janice Harshbarger - September 10, 2024 at 01:31 PM

DS

“ When I moved back to Huntington after a 30 year absence she helped me recover family roots I did not know about. When I discovered letters sent to my dad from friends in WW!!, I set out on a mission to find the families who had written those letters to my father. With her help and the Tab I found all but six of the families. Families were so grateful to get them back and I learned a lot about my father before I was born. For her help and diligence I will always be grateful for her help. May she rest in peace.

Don Swank - September 10, 2024 at 12:39 PM

JH

“ Sorry to hear of Joan's passing. She was an amazing lady and will be missed. Our prayers to the family to get through this difficult time.

Joe Humbert - September 10, 2024 at 12:33 PM

BJ

“ Lori and family, Very sorry to hear of your mother's passing she was a great lady and will be missed! Take comfort in the fact she's now with your dad and has received the best assignment in heaven. Melanie and I will keep you all in our thoughts and prayers

Brian Jenks - September 10, 2024 at 09:39 AM

MS

“ We are so sorry to hear of Joan’s passing...she was always so helpful when I had questions at the library...helpful and pleasant. She will be missed. May she rest in peace,. **OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILY. Monte & Mary Jo Schenkel**

MR & MRS MONTE SCHENKEL - September 10, 2024 at 08:09 AM