

Queen Easter Jessie was a wonderful friend and colleague. Our friendship began in September of 1973 at Eastview Elementary School. Mr. W.W. Foy, the Principal at Eastview, assigned her to help me with testing new students. It was immediately evident that she would be a gifted asset to any classroom to which she was assigned. At my request, Mr. Foy agreed that Easter would remain with me as a Teacher Aide for the 1973-74 school year. Thus, began a friendship that lasted nearly fifty years.

Easter had an innate ability to "teach" the students just like the classroom teacher. She mimicked my teaching which served as a tremendous reinforcement to helping the Title I students gain self-assurance in their reading skills. Her love for the students shone through every aspect of her encounters with them.

Easter and I became such close friends we even dressed with similar colors and clothes without planning to do so. The students noticed that it happened often and asked, "Miss Jessie, are you and Miss Johnson sisters?" She would reply, "Yes"! and then go on to say that "I have a different Mama and Miss Johnson has a different Daddy". The precious students believed her and would smile and say "Oh". There were many times when her humor was used to soften tense situations.

Our friendship continued outside the classroom. While Moses (Andrew) was serving in the U.S. Army, they purchased a house on Brookdale Drive. Easter wanted to make the house more beautiful and livable. So, another Teacher Aide and I helped Easter hang wallpaper over much of the house. Needless to say, that was a very special time.

Easter learned to do many projects while waiting for Moses' return to Americus. Among those projects was making beautiful handmade Christmas ornaments which adorned her living room Christmas tree. She also learned to do Macrame`. Macrame` is a form of handwork using textile yarn to create beautiful handbags, etc.

My husband retired from GSW in 1985 and we moved to Dothan, Alabama to be near our aging parents. At that time a new phase of friendship with Easter began with her many visits to Dothan from Americus. Sometimes other teacher friends would come with her. I also travelled to Americus for memorable visits and birthday celebrations with her. She and Moses even organized a trip to Dothan and brought a van load of people to attend the celebration of mine and Harold's 50th Wedding Anniversary in 1990. Those mutual visits continued until Moses' health prevented the excursions.

My love and respect for Easter has extended for nearly a half century. i am very thankful to have enjoyed her friendship for so long. She has been a true blessing in my life and my memory of her will last forever. REST IN PEACE DEAR EASTER. I LOVE YOU!

Dottie Johnson