



## Joan EG Lewis

November 23, 2025

Joan Emelda Geraldine Lewis, 89, passed away on Sunday, November 23rd, 2025. Joan was born April 2nd, 1936 in Georgetown, British Guyana as the youngest of 7 children. Despite her birthday being a day after April Fool's, her sister, Cisely, claimed she was actually born on April Fool's day and their parents, Remington and Christina had the dates switched. She was not very fond of this joke. Being born and raised in British Guyana, Joan hadn't planted her feet on American soil until July 28th, 1957 through the Department of Justice in Miami, Florida. This was only a pitstop though, as Joan found herself in the Bronx shortly thereafter, where she met a lifelong friend in Millicent Alexandrina Bennett, A.K.A. "Aunt Mab." Joan would stay with Aunt Mab until reuniting with her sister Cisely upon her move to America. It wasn't until Joan met the love of her life, Vernon William Lewis, that she began a family of her own. After marrying Vernon in 1963, Joan gave birth to her first child, Bethel Octavia McGraw on August 14th, 1964. She would have her second child, Jessica Anne Lewis, shortly thereafter on August 19th, 1965. Her union with Vernon led to extensive travel, thanks to his role in the Air Force. Places like Kahlihi, Hawaii and Tachikawa, Japan were the most frequent locations of her reminiscing. She headed back to the boogie-down Bronx in 1971, where it all began, once her husband retired from the Air Force. In 1995, she would move to Teaneck, where she remained until her passing. To know Joan, was to know someone dutiful to her family, but fiercely independent. For the people she held dear, there was no favor too grand. She

would often tell her youngest grandson “If there’s anything you need, you just tell me. I would do anything for you. You are my darling, even though you’re a real nincompoop” She was the first to extend a helping hand, but also the first to tell you “I can do it my goddamn self.”

Joan was the queen of sayings that didn’t make sense. After biting into something awful, she would express to anybody in the vicinity how terrible it tasted, only to immediately add “Would you like to try it,” as if her flowery review wasn’t an indication of something you should not try at all. There were also phrases she championed that only she could understand, followed up by a refusal to explain the meaning of what she said. “You think your grandmother’s three cents,” was a common one that never received an explanation. Joan was a real comedian, with brutal honesty to match her sense of humor. A combination that would leave people unable to contain their laughter, as long as they had thick skin. She was quick with a joke, but even quicker with a jab. Despite never setting foot in France, she wouldn’t hesitate to let you know “I smell wonderful, like an evening in Paris.” If she disapproved of your hairstyle, or thought your clothes were hideous, it was only a matter of time before she’d say “Your hair looks like a bird nest,” or “What the hell are you wearing?” Usually, that time didn’t take too long. She knew how to hold a room’s attention. Whenever she finished speaking, an eruption of laughter usually followed. Joan’s bustling personality always resulted in an onslaught of visitors, whom she’d regale with tales of her mischievous and adventurous past. Regardless of how many times she’d retell the same stories, they always retained her audience, like a crowd waiting for a punchline. Many friends of her family members would often leave her home saying “Man, I love that lady, she’s hilarious.” A select few family members however, would occasionally leave a little less pleased. This was likely because she loved to say “Carry your funky ass out of my house,” once she reached her limit. Joan was many things, but patient was not one of them. Joan was a self-proclaimed “lady with style”. She took great pride in her extensive wardrobe of clothes, shoes and pocketbooks that hadn’t seen the

light of day in years. Each and every time she showcased her clothes, shoes and pocketbooks, it was almost immediately followed by “Your grandmother has some good stuff, boy.” Joan believed herself to be tough as nails. She would laugh uncontrollably, every time she watched Judge Judy rip into someone on TV. Yet asking her what she would do if Judge Judy spoke to her like that always evoked the response “Boy, they would’ve had to throw my case out, cause she’s not gonna talk to me any kind of way.” She was really a generous and considerate soul deep down underneath though. Small gestures like heading out and returning with things she thought others could make use of, showed the type of person she was. And in true grandma fashion, you couldn’t step into her home without being barraged by “Did you eat? There’s cooked food in the refrigerator. Help yourself.” Joan was many things, to many people and in many ways, the heartbeat of her family. She is survived by Bethel & Richard McGraw, Jessica Anne Lewis, Kyle Weldon Lewis, Jocelyn Elizabeth Spears, Joshua Edward Spears the 5th, Lennox Williams Spears, countless nieces, nephews and cousins.

# Cemetery Details

## Long Island National Cemetery

2040 Wellwood Avenue  
Farmingdale, NY 11735

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 5. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Volk Leber Funeral Home  
789 Teaneck Road  
Teaneck, NJ 07666  
info@volkleber.com  
<http://www.volkleber.com>

## Funeral Service

DEC 5. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Volk Leber Funeral Home  
789 Teaneck Road  
Teaneck, NJ 07666  
info@volkleber.com  
<http://www.volkleber.com>