



## Margaret "Jo" JoAnne Safrit

January 17, 2023

Margaret JoAnne Safrit (Jo), 87, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 17, at Well-Spring Retirement Community in Greensboro, NC. Jo was the daughter of Margaret Cannon Cline Safrit and Ernest Crawford Safrit Sr. of Salisbury. Jo was educated in the Salisbury City Schools, beginning at Wiley Elementary and graduating from Boyden High School as a member of the class of 1953. She then attended Woman's College of the University of North Carolina (now UNCG) and graduated with the class of 1957. After spending three years at the University of Texas, Austin, she enrolled in the graduate program at the University of Wisconsin, where she earned her master's and doctoral degrees in Kinesiology, specializing in quantitative measurement. She went on to hold academic positions at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and American University in Washington, DC. As a professor at UW, Madison, Dr. Safrit was awarded the Henry-Basom Professorship, an endowed professorship she held until her retirement from the university.

Dr. Safrit received many honors during her career in academe, including the Luther Halsey Gullick Award from Shape America, the Hetherington Award from the National Academy of Kinesiology, and numerous awards from state and local organizations. She authored and published several books on measurement and numerous research articles in the field of quantitative measurement.

A highlight in her career was her being invited to lecture in 1985 at Shanghai

University of Sport in Shanghai, China, only a short time after China was opened for travel by Westerners. She returned to China several times, including once as an honored guest at the 60th anniversary of Shanghai University, during which she was awarded an honorary doctorate in Education. She was also invited to lecture in Korea and throughout Europe.

A physical education major at Woman's College (Class of '57), Jo returned to Greensboro at the end of her professional career as a professor and devoted herself whole-heartedly to the University. With a particular passion for women's basketball, she created the Mildred Curlee Cooper Scholarship for Women's Basketball in honor of her high school basketball coach. With her late, beloved partner, Dr. Catherine Ennis '77 MS, Jo established the Safrit-Ennis Women's Basketball Athletic Scholarship Fund. Her giving helped upgrade the team's locker room, and she was also instrumental in the foundation of the Game Changers, a group dedicated to growing support for UNCG Women's Basketball.

Jo was a steadfast supporter of Kinesiology at UNCG. Very early in the Light the Way campaign, Jo established the Safrit-Ennis Distinguished Professorship in Kinesiology, a chair now held by Dr. Laurie Wideman. Jo endowed the Safrit Measurement in Research Fund so faculty and qualified PhD students in the Department of Kinesiology could develop measurement tools in their areas of research. Jo also established the Catherine D. Ennis Undergraduate Kinesiology Scholarship (originally the Joanne Safrit Undergraduate Kinesiology Scholarship). And she supported many other essential initiatives, including the UNCG Alumni Association Fund, New York Theatre Showcase, Spartan Athletics Scholarship Fund, Kinesiology Enrichment Fund, and Women Veterans Historical Project Fund. Her impact was wide-ranging and will be felt for generations to come.

Jo was predeceased by her partner, Catherine Dunnington Ennis, her parents, Ernest Crawford Safrit, Sr. and Margaret Cline Safrit, her brother Ernest Crawford Safrit Jr., and sister-in-law Patricia Hoffman Safrit. She is survived

by her nephew, Crawford Brent Safrit (Amy), niece Ashley Safrit Keppel (George), great-nieces Margaret (Meg) Safrit and Sophie Keppel, and great-nephew Jack Keppel, all of whom she spoiled generously. She is also survived by numerous cousins on both the Cline and Safrit sides whom she remained close to all her life.

Jo was a long-time member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Salisbury. She grew up in the church along with many of her friends. She remained close to both her high school and WC classmates. At Boyden in particular, she was a member of the Subs, a group of basketball friends and teammates – undefeated in her four years at high school! She would like to express her gratitude to this lifelong group of friends. She would also like to express her appreciation for her doctoral advisor, Professor Marie R. Liba (now deceased), who laid the groundwork for Jo's success in academe.

The family would like to express our appreciation for the outstanding care provided by Well-Spring over the years, and a special note of thanks to her personal assistant, Sindi Henley.

Memorial gifts may be made to Well-Spring Retirement Community or to The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Memorial/funeral plans are currently incomplete.