

*"somebody/ anybody sing a black girl's song
bring her out to know herself to know you
but sing her rhythms carin/ struggle/ hard
times sing her song of life she's been dead so
long closed in silence so long she doesn't know
the sound of her own voice her infinite beauty
she's half-notes scattered without rhythm/ no
tune sing her sighs sing the song of her
possibilities sing a righteous gospel let her be
born let her be born & handled warmly."*

– Ntozake Shange

*"Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again
and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take
from you."*

John 16:22

SERVICES OF COMFORT ENTRUSTED TO

Watson's Funeral Home

www.WatsonFuneralHome.com

10913 SUPERIOR AVE. – CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106

TELEPHONE (216) 721-0066



CELEBRATING HER LIFE



Barbara Ashby

NOV 03, 1931 – APR 04, 2026

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2026

WAKE: 12:30 PM – MEMORIAL: 1:00 PM

WATSON'S FUNERAL HOME

10913 SUPERIOR AVE – CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106

Order of Service

MUSICAL PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL THE FAMILY

FAMILY VISITATION 12:30 PM – 1:00 PM

OMEGA OMEGA CEREMONY..... DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY INC

SCRIPTURE

OLD & NEW TESTAMENT

PRAYER MINISTER

REMARKS DeWAYNE REED
DONALD STIGGERS
KAREN ASHBY

OBITUARY..... PLEASE READ SILENTLY

EULOGY..... CHRIS DELK

RECESSIONAL FAMILY & FRIENDS

INTERMENT

PRIVATE

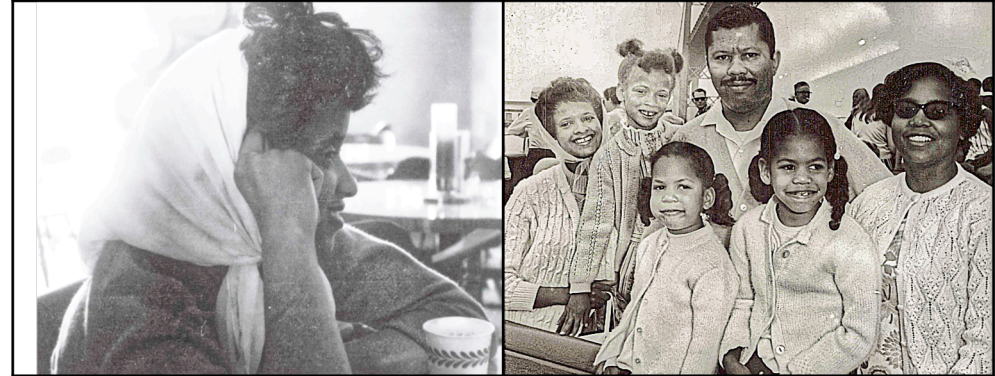
REPAST

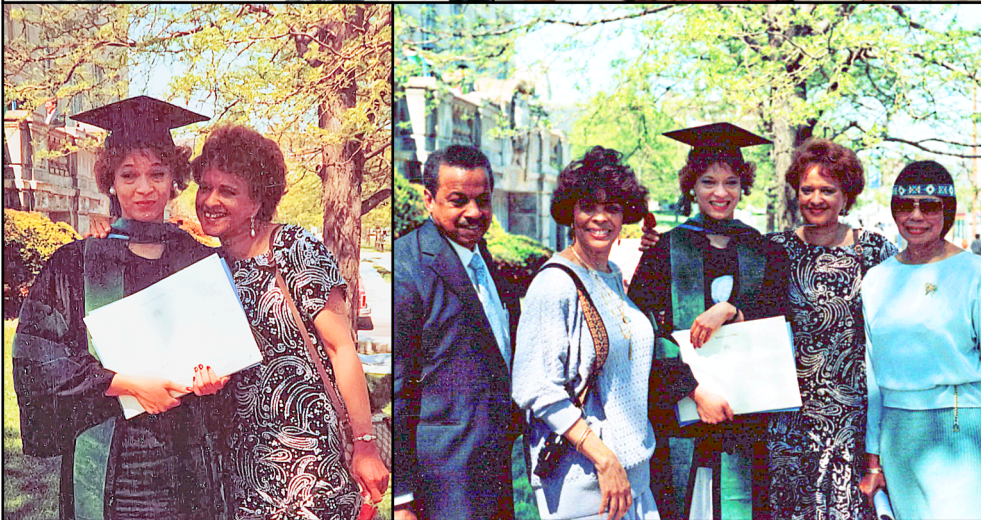
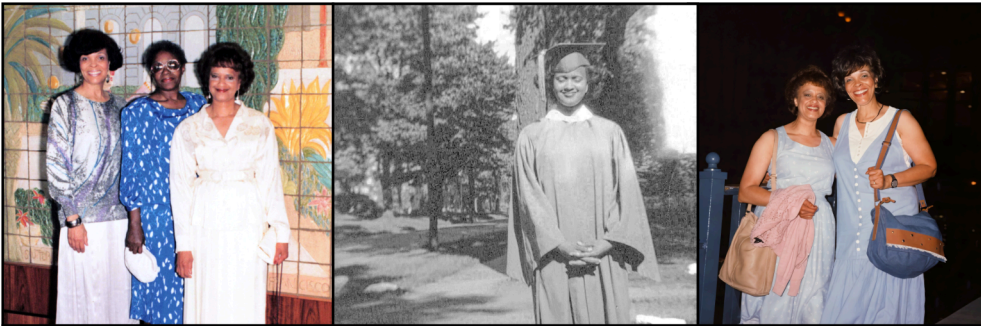
FOLLOWING THE SERVICE, FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE INVITED TO A REPAST UNTIL 5:30 P.M. AT:

EDWIN'S LEADERSHIP & RESTAURANT
12383 CEDAR ROAD – CLEVELAND, OH 44106

AFTER 5:30 P.M., FAMILY AND FRIENDS WILL CONTINUE THE FELLOWSHIP AT:

13713 DREXMORE ROAD – CLEVELAND, OH 44120





Obituary

Barbara Lee Thomas Ashby transitioned to eternal life on April 4, 2026, with her beloved daughter, Dr. Karen Ashby, by her side. Barbara was the only child of Amanda Stiggers Thomas and Robert Thomas. She was born on November 3, 1931, in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, and lived her 94 years with grace, purpose, curiosity, and adventure.

Barbara was raised in Warren, Ohio, in a close-knit and supportive community that helped shape her lifelong commitment to education, culture, and service. An outstanding student, she attended The Ohio State University, where she majored in education and became a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She was especially honored to be inducted into a single-letter chapter and graduated in 1953.

While at Ohio State, she met Milton E. Ashby, M.D., whom she later married. Together they journeyed through his medical training in Akron and Cincinnati, as well as his service in the United States Air Force, before eventually settling in California, where he practiced orthopedic surgery.

Barbara's true calling was education. She taught during the early years of the Head Start program and was known as an exceptional and compassionate teacher whose students adored her. She believed deeply in nurturing young minds and generously shared her talents through involvement in the PTA and Girl Scouts of America. Her dedication to children and community service touched countless lives and served as a powerful example to her daughter, Karen, whose accomplishments reflected the values of discipline, education, and perseverance that Barbara instilled in her.

A woman of many passions, Barbara was an enthusiastic sports fan with a remarkable knowledge of football and athletics. She followed the Ohio

State Buckeyes football faithfully and enjoyed nearly every sport imaginable. Family and friends often joked that the Cleveland Browns should have consulted her on draft selections because of her sharp insight and encyclopedic sports knowledge.

Barbara lived in Los Angeles from 1964 until 1972 before returning to Warren, the community she always considered home. Later, she moved to Shaker Heights to be closer to family.

An adventurous spirit, Barbara loved to travel and embraced new experiences wholeheartedly. She enjoyed trips to Alaska, Caribbean cruises, Broadway productions in New York City, and an unforgettable six-week tour of Europe with her then 8-year-old daughter Karen by her side as her traveling companion. She had a deep appreciation for theater, museums, and music, especially jazz. Among her favorite artists were Nancy Wilson, George Benson, Chaka Khan, and The Jackson 5. Through her love of travel, culture, and learning, she inspired Karen to appreciate the arts, education, and the wider world.

Barbara also delighted in fine food and had a sophisticated palate. She especially loved seafood, salmon, and shrimp, and her family affectionately remembered her strong opinions about good cooking and quality ingredients.

Barbara Lee Thomas Ashby will be remembered as an extraordinary woman: an educator, traveler, arts enthusiast, sports lover, gourmet, devoted mother, and treasured friend. Above all, she will be remembered for her intelligence, elegance, warmth, humor, and the lasting impact she made on the many lives she touched.

*LOVINGLY SUBMITTED,
THE FAMILY*