Ms. Susan Burnell Edwards was born in the family of Mr. Douglas Edwards and Ms. Doris May Edwards in Dartford, Kent in the United Kingdom on June 14, 1942.

Just like her virtues, Ms. Susan had several names. Many know her as Ms. Sue and others call her Sosina—her choice of adopted Ethiopian name for Susan. In her home, in the community and at the work place, family, friends and colleague call her Mammy.

Special Edition
Ms. Sue got her Bachelor of Science degree in Botany, with honors, from the Manchester University in United Kingdom in 1964. A year later she received a Master of Science degree in Plant Taxonomy from the University of Liverpool in United Kingdom. Ms. Sue was qualified as a teacher with the Ministry of Education in UK in 1966. She moved to Ethiopia in 1969 with her former husband to teach in the Department of Biology in Addis Ababa University. She later met with Dr. Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher when he started working as Dean of the Department of Biology in the University after returning from his PhD study in the Bangor University, UK.

Ms. Sue and Dr. Tewolde later got married. In 1984, they moved to Asmara University with their family. Ms. Sue played a lead role in establishing the Department of Marine Biology in Asmara University. Then, in 1991 the family moved back to Ethiopia due to political unrest in Eritrea. Ms. Sue continued to teach in Addis Ababa University for some time.
In 1996 the couple decided to change one of the bedrooms in their house to an office. They established the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) to help smallholder farmers enhance productivity by using eco-friendly agriculture practices. Ms. Sue served as Director and other key responsibilities in ISD for 21 Years. She strived for transferring knowledge to and enhancing the capacity of ISD employees. She created a liberal working environment where people can foster creativity.

Ms. Sue contributed to improving the product and productivity of over 15,000 farmers directly and thousands more through the introduction of eco-friendly agriculture practices. She was one of the pioneers in voicing the concerns of Ethiopian farmers; she contributed to marrying modern agricultural research with the critical traditional knowledge in the farming community. Ms. Sue inspired and cultivated the principle of sustainable development in over 25,000 students and out-of-school youth in Ethiopia. She was a true Ethiopian who played a great role in installing a strong sense of Ethiopian identity and personality in Ethiopian youth.
Ms. Sue was a biodiversity hero who fought for humans, animals and plants. She was a reason for the plantation of over 600,000 trees of various species in farming communities, schools and urban and semi-urban areas in Ethiopia. Ms. Sue fed the birds in her backyard. She left them locks of her old-fallen hair so they can use it to build their nest. Ms. Sue never let spider webs to be removed from corners in her house; she said, 'it is their home and no one should destroy it!'

Ms. Sue was a dedicated environmentalist for the world and an activist for sustainable development in Ethiopia. She was a founding member and principal actor in several national, continental and international networks for development, and partnerships for eco-friendly agriculture and the environment. She was a prominent figure in the fight against Genetically Modified Organism (GMO).

Ms. Sue has one daughter from her first husband and four daughters and five grand children with Dr. Tewolde. Beyond the biological family extension, the couple raised and supported many children under their roof. In the weekends Ms. Sue led the neighborhood children in a cleaning operation across the neighborhood. She was a member of the local soccer team in the village; she was the weekend-referee of the children’s team.

Ms. Sue holds the fear of God in her heart. She was humane, sympathetic, kind and generous. She always put others before herself.
Ms. Susan Edwards received numerous recognitions and awards for her contribution to Ethiopia and her role in the international community. The major ones include,

1. September 2017: Together with Dr. Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher, awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 5th One World Award celebration organized and hosted by IFOAM Organics International and Rapunzel Naturkost for support to and promotion of organic/ecological agriculture.

2. December 2011: Press Release of 14 Sept. 2011, Kofi Annan shares the award with food supply project Tigray in Ethiopia, Award Winners of the twelfth Gothenburg Award for Sustainable Development, 14 December 2011, in which Ms. Sue Edwards received the Award on behalf of the Institute for Sustainable Development along with Kofi Annan as chairman of AGRA (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa).