



Mary Jean Exley

JUN 24, 1924 - NOV 11, 2015



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MARY JEAN EXLEY - OBITUARY November 11, 2015 Phoenix Arizona 85382
Mary Jean Exley (Winchell) often called Jean was born June 24, 1924 on a Farm House near Derby, Iowa to Benjamin and Zula Winchell. She was named after the famous author of her day, Jean Stratton Porter, who her mothered loved and read religiously. She was the oldest child and first to be born to Ben and Zula. She would remain the only child for approximately 6 years until her sister Willeen was born and two years later a brother Charles. The family moved around farming until they settled in a house outside of Humeston owned by Louis Hoffman, a widower who had emigrated from Germany and wife had passed away. Her father, Ben, took care of the farm and the livestock and her mother took care of the children, house and Louis who was bed ridden and was confined to his bed. When Louis died he left the farm and livestock to her parents and this became their permanent home. She attended various little small school houses throughout the area and finally ending up at Cambria where she graduated High School in 1942. Jean was a product of the depression and farm life so being born during this era she learned to be very thrifty and a home maker. Her mother ensured she learned to cook with the basics and could sew quilt and dresses by hand or sewing machine. Life on the farm was not easy, requiring everyone to carry their fair share but she loved this life and parts of it would always be in her blood so to speak until she passed. As Humeston and Derby were very close neighbors, she knew most everyone in the area. One of which was a young kid named Billy Exley. He was one of 5 boys and his parents had a farm in Derby. My dad recalled going by the Winchell's and seeing a young girl playing but being young gave it no more consequence than to say "Hello" and go on about his business. As time went by they started dating and finally in 1941 after my dad graduated from high school he decided to try his wings and moved to California where he worked in an airplane factory. He was there for about a year when he



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decided that he loved "Jean" and wanted to marry her. She had decided 1942 to take training in Beautician or Hair Dressing so she had moved to a small room in Des Moines where she lived while going to school. In the meantime He moved back to Humeston declaring his devotion to only her. In August, 1943 they were married, Mr. and Mrs. William Exley. 1944 William or Bill as most new him, Joined the Army Air Corp to serve his country during WWII. He was trained to be a pilot and they spent the next couple of years traveling around the states. In 1945 Bill was discharged from the service as a Lieutenant, and the family, which now contained one daughter, Elizabeth A, Betty for short, moved into a farm house outside Derby/Humeston. In 1946 another daughter was born, Judith K, Judy and finally in 1947 a son was born, Timothy William, Tim as he would be called. Bill worked at hauling rock independently and later the Exley Farm Equipment but financially they struggled. Bill thought about the job he had left in California and they both decided to take their little family West and see if they could do better than they currently were doing. This meant leaving all their family and friends but they thought this the best course for their future. In 1950, they packed up all their belongings and children heading for that pot of gold in California. They drove a 1949 Ford sedan and attached was a Trailer filled with all their valuables. With the help of friends from Humeston, they found a house and schools for the children of age to attend in Norwalk California. Bill also found a job at North American Aviation building airplanes. Here they prospered. Jean, in 1954, secured a job at one of the elementary schools working in the cafeteria of the school their children attended and less than a mile away which she walked every day. They lived in the house in Norwalk from 51 until 84. All three children grew up here. Mom was a girl Scout and Den Mother and a little league parent. IN 1962 their first daughter graduated from High school and went on to attend Cerritos College. In 1964, their second daughter Graduated from High School, too. In 1964 Betty married Frank Ousley and in April 1965 Judy married her high school sweet heart, Bob Wise. The only child still at home was their son, Tim. He joined the Marines and was stationed in Vietnam. So now all the children have left home, Jean and her guy, decide to do some traveling while working diligently at their jobs, Bill now a manager at NAA and Jean had started in 66 to work for General



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Telephone Company as an operator and later at a SAST Board until 1980. From 1963 until 1975 the family grew with 7 grandchildren. Jean managed to stay very busy working, helping with the grandchildren, traveling, entertaining family from home, reading and gardening and In 1972 her life drastically changed when she found Jesus as her savior attending Downey Baptist and gatherings at Melodyland in Anaheim. She studied and rejoiced in her newly found Savior by spreading the word whenever she could. In 1975, her father passed and her mother was alone so in 1980 Jean quit her job to help her mother until 1983 when her mother remarried Lawrence Miller, her mother's childhood boyfriend. NAA was shutting down so they transferred Bill to Boeing Aviation in Wichita, KS as a Temp. He enjoyed the work so much he retired from NAA and sold their home in Norwalk, California and moved permanently to Wichita, Kansas in 1983. Jean did not work after this joined the Messiah Baptist church where she studied the bible, holding regular bible studies in her home. From 1994 until 2010 they retired and became snow bunnies living in Wichita in the summer and in the winter they traveling back to their beloved California then changed in 2000 to Phoenix, AZ to visit family. In 2011, due to health problems and age, Jean and Bill, moved permanently to Phoenix, AZ to seek the aid of their children and grandchildren. In May of 2015 Jean lost after 71 years together, Bill, the love of her life. After this, she grieved for his presence and slowly died a little each day until November 11, 2015 she joined him for eternity. She leaves a sister, Willeen Green (Cliff) and a brother, Charles Winchell. Also Daughters, Elizabeth (Betty) Ousley and Judith (Judy) Puldas (Gunnar), and son, Timothy W. (Tim) Exley (Bonnie). Along with seven Grandchildren, Oldest to Youngest, Mary Beth Nitsche (Michael), Stephanie Smith (Jim), Robyn Swatzbaugh (Ron), Tyler Ousley, Amy King (Larry), Wendy Exley and Timothy J Exley. Fifteen great grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren and her very precious dogs Ruby rose and P.D. To send flowers or a memorial gift to the family of Mary Jean Exley please visit our Sympathy Store. Cemetery Details Cambria Cemetery Cambria, IA 50060 Visitation NOV 20. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CST) Thomas-Randolph Funeral Homes 204 N Greeley StCorydon, IA 50060[(#)];[(#)] Funeral Service NOV 21. 10:00 AM (CST) Christian United Methodist Church Hwy 65Humeston, IA 50123



Tribute Wall

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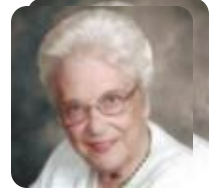
Thomas Funeral Home posted:

October 21 at 3:54 PM



Thomas Funeral Home shared an album called **Obituary Wall**.

October 13 at 5:07 PM



Anonymous sent a Divine Peace Bouquet to the Exley family.

November 18 at 7:34 PM



Divine Peace Bouquet posted:

Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Jean Exley.

November 18 at 7:00 PM



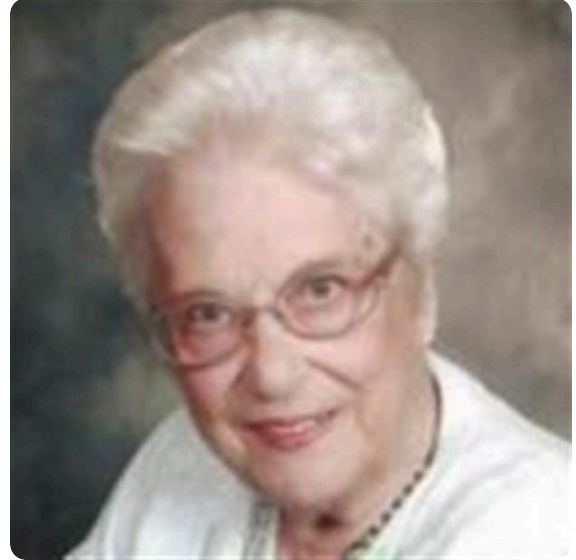
Media

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Thomas Funeral Home shared 2 photos to the **Obituary Wall** album.

October 13 at 5:07 PM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Mary by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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