



Birdell "Birdie" Smith

December 16, 1923 - October 27, 2016

Birdell (Birdie) Smith

Ankeny. Birdell Taylor Smith, 92, of Ankeny, Iowa, formerly of Oskaloosa, died Thursday, October 27, 2016, at the Mill Pond Retirement Center, Ankeny, Iowa.

Birdie has always led a private life, and as such, she has requested no public service will be conducted. Her cremains will be buried at Friends Cemetery in Oskaloosa next to her husband, Ike Smith. Her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will be in attendance at the time.

Birdie led an interesting and variable life. She was a good wife to Ike, a loving Mom to Cres, Renee and Royal, a fun Grandma to Amber, Michelle, Monique, Julie and Andy and a thrilled great Grandma to Cayden and Lucy. Folks in Oskaloosa and New Sharon knew the humorous animal lover, who was ready for a good time and open for an adventure.

She was born December 16, 1923 in Troy, Montana. She was the 13th of 14 kids. Her challenges in life started as a toddler as she and all her siblings were taken to Orphanage by their mother. Although, the kids were all split up around the upper Northwest they worked hard to stay in contact. From a less than stellar step-home, she left home as a teenager and hitchhiked and worked around the country. Eventually in Chicago, while working at a munition plant during the WW II, she lost her thumb. Soon after, in Chicago, she met her first husband, Robert (Roney) Roenspiess. He was an Oskaloosa native, where they moved to begin their life. With first son Cres born in 1949, she became a young widow in early 1950 and gave birth to her daughter, Renee, later that same year. In typical Birdie fashion, she picked herself up and got on with life for her kids. Within a few years she met Ike Smith. They married on May 5, 1954. Ike became Dad to her kids. Ike and Birdie were avid outdoors people and lived just outside of town where they had multiple pets, horses and chickens. They enjoyed a cabin by the river as well and fun times with extended Smith family members. In 1961, they were thrilled when son Royal joined the brood.

Birdie rarely met an animal that did not become a pet. From Lu Lu the pit bull to Fang the

crow to Rambo the turkey to Luther the monkey. Her big heart always gave each creature a chance. You just never knew who would be living in the house next! Her last animal friends were the geese at Mill Pond. Her room overlooked the beautiful pond and she enjoyed getting outside to feed them and they ate right out of her hand. They came running when they saw Birdie.

When grandkids started coming into her life in 1974 she came into her own. She was a fun grandma and gave the kids all types of interesting experiences. They all have great stories of what they did at Grandma and Grandpa's house!

She was a loyal wife, assisting Ike through his illness with compassion. He died on October 29, 2007. She would be happy that she got the last word by living 2 days short of 9 years longer! Through the years, they faced many challenges as a couple, but together they stayed, and created a life on their own terms.

She is survived by Creston Roenspiess of Antioch, California, Renee Ginder of Newton, IA, and Royal (& Joyce) Smith of Cambridge, IA; grandchildren: Amber (& Joel) Rand, Michelle Smith, Monique Smith, Julie (& Chris) Bitting and Andy Smith and great grandchildren Cayden and Lucy Bitting plus numerous nieces and nephews from all over the world.

The family extends thanks to the Mill Pond Retirement Center and Hospice of Central Iowa for their loving care.

If you choose to send a memorial to the family, please do so as a donation to the Animal Rescue League of Iowa.

Comments



“ Sorry to hear about your Mom. She had a big heart always laughing we had a lot of good time. Of course she watched the kids and they love all the animals. Always will I remember the family get together what a good time we had. Spent a lot of time with her and Grace. LOVED THEM BOTH//////// Your cousin Connie Zimmerman

Connie Zimmerman - November 01, 2016 at 09:24 PM



“ Royal & family, Sorry to hear of your loss. Your Mom was a wonderful & kind person. A joy to visit with & know. May fond memories bring you comfort. Kristie Lynch

Kristie Lynch - October 30, 2016 at 08:29 AM



“ Renee and family, What a great tribute to your mom and how exactly it described her. She lived life to fullest and shared that with all. She definitely lived life out loud!!! I hope that you are all at peace with her passing. Warm thoughts to all of you. Candace Gerard Slobe

Candace Gerard Slobe - October 29, 2016 at 07:29 PM



“ I have many memories of Birdie, always welcome at her and Ike's home. It was like going to a zoo because she had so many animals to greet you. Birdie had a huge heart for family and friends. Thinking of the family. Judy Smith

Judy Smith - October 29, 2016 at 07:23 PM



“ Birdie was one of a kind!! She had such a big heart, not only for the animals she loved, but for many family members!!! Thanks for the memories Birdie!! Don and Pam Smith

Pam Smith - October 29, 2016 at 04:46 PM



“ A beautiful lady who brought joy to all who know and loved her. My sincere sympathy. Mona Bond

Mona Bond - October 28, 2016 at 06:37 AM