



Mabel Griffis

November 10, 1918 - July 13, 2018

Elma Mabel Griffis, 99, of Oskaloosa, died Friday, July 13, 2018 at the MHP Hospice Serenity House in Oskaloosa. Elma Mabel Houser was born in Mahaska County on the family farm at the base of Bellefontaine Hill close to the Des Moines River near Tracy, Iowa on November 10, 1918. Mabel was the youngest of eight children born to Jacob and Elma McMeins Houser. She had five brothers and two sisters. She attended grade and high school at Tracy, graduating from high school in 1936. After taking a bookkeeping and office management course, she started working at F.W. Woolworth in Oskaloosa (for 10 cents an hour). Then, on to Sears Roebuck store for two years. In the summer of 1939 Mabel married Lynn Griffis. They moved to Newton, Iowa for three years, and returned to Oskaloosa in 1943 to care for Lynn's father, Meade Griffis, the blacksmith. Mabel has lived in Oskaloosa ever since. Mabel and Lynn were the parents of three children, Judy, Jim and Jack. She was a homemaker for many years, and when her children were older, in 1957 she started working for the Younkers Store in Oskaloosa. She was manager of the ladies' sportswear department. In the middle 50's she was active with Mother's March for Better Schools, and held various offices in the PTA. She was a Cub Scout Den Mother. She was a member of Central United Methodist Church, and a member of Centennial Circle of King's Daughters. In 1962 Mabel was hired by the Charles Russell Insurance Agency and became a licensed personal lines agent. She worked in the insurance office for 36 years namely, Russell Insurance. The business made a name change to Professional Insurance Counselors, then merged with Brown Insurance known as Butler-Brown Insurance. Mabel retired in 1998 at the age of 79 years. She has always been a sports fan having played basketball at Tracy High School. She enjoyed watching the Iowa Hawkeyes, Iowa State Cyclones, and the Chicago Cubs. She was an excellent seamstress, having made numerous quilts which she gave to all her children and grandchildren. For many years she made all her own clothes and those of her children. She loved working in her yard, traveling, and having fun with her family. Her family was always the best part of her life, and she said they were what kept her going in her long life. She loved and taught us all so much, most importantly to love and treat others with dignity and respect. She will forever be remembered through her ideals carried forward by those she has left behind. We will love her forever. She lives in our hearts.

She is survived by her daughter, Judy Belzer, and son, Jack (Cathy) Griffis of Oskaloosa. Three granddaughters, Mary Ann (Roger) Horn and Jennifer Griffis of Oskaloosa, Valerie (Jeff) Spencer of Belle Plaine, Minnesota, four great granddaughters, C.J. and Jessica Spencer (Tim Mechtel), Sadie and Aubree Huber, two great-great grandsons, Sawyer and Myles Mechtel, and many nieces and nephews who were special to her. She was also "Mom" to her special cat, KoKo.

Preceding her in death besides her husband, Lynn in 1973, son, Jim in 1992, and her parents, her five brothers, Dell, Carl, Park, Ralph, and Cecil Houser. Sisters, Lottie Binns and Ethel Van Engelhoven.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. in the Bates Funeral Chapel in Oskaloosa with Reverend Bruce Wittern officiating. Burial will be in the Forest Cemetery in Oskaloosa. The Bates Funeral Chapel is in charge of the arrangements. Visitation will begin Tuesday after 1 p.m. in the Bates Funeral Chapel and the family will be at the funeral chapel from 5-7 p.m. Tuesday evening to greet friends and relatives. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to Central United Methodist Church of Oskaloosa.

Events

JUL **Visitation** 01:00PM - 07:00PM

17

Bates Funeral Chapel

114 South 7th Street, Oskaloosa, IA, US, 52577

JUL **Funeral Service** 10:30AM

18

Bates Funeral Chapel

114 South 7th Street, Oskaloosa, IA, US, 52577

JUL **Burial**

18

Forest Cemetery

634 North 9th Street, Oskaloosa, IA, US, 52577

Comments



“ Judy and Jack,

I am so sorry about the loss of your mother. She was always so sweet and a very loyal friend to my mom.

I know she told you both how thankful she was for your help and love. You can take comfort knowing you did everything possible to make her last years easier - and to know how incredibly proud she was of you both.

Now our parents are next-door neighbors. Your mom always told mine to take her phone along; because they'd be so close they could chat.

Linda Hourihan-Steil

Linda Steil - July 27, 2018 at 03:14 PM



“ judy you have my deepest sympathy in the lose of your mother. regardless how old they are we are never ready to let them go. just remember all the good times together and the love you shared. marge evans hartgers

marge evans hartgers - July 19, 2018 at 12:46 PM



“ Judy and family,
Sincere sympathy in the loss of your mother. I remember her friendly smile when I was growing up in Oskaloosa,
Louise Binns Burson
Manistique, MI

Louise Burson - July 16, 2018 at 06:58 AM



“ Our Sympathies to the family. Reading her obituary, sounded like she was an exceptional lady.
Robert and Patti Mitrisin

P Mitrisin - July 15, 2018 at 12:39 PM



“ Jack and family, our sincere condolences at your time of loss. Tom & Jeri Harsh

Tom Harsh - July 14, 2018 at 06:09 PM



“ Very kind lady and was the nicest person you will ever meet with that beautiful smile, Judy and Mary Ann we are thinking of you in your time of loss. Jeff & Jill Ferguson

Jeff Ferguson - July 14, 2018 at 05:56 PM



“ My sweet Mother - I know you wanted to take me with you, but, hopefully, when I get there, we can have a fun shopping trip like we used to. I feel so blessed to have had you in my life these many years. Thank you for your loving care, loving ways, and all the other ways I am so grateful for. Love you so much. Judy.

Judy Belzer - July 14, 2018 at 01:37 PM



“ Judy, Jack, I only met your Mother a time or two, but she was very nice to your friends. Judy, my Mother will be 101 in October. I was just thinking about you 2 days ago ... wondering how things are with you - please know that i'm praying for you and your family. Your Mom will be a most beautiful star in the Heavens, now, i know. <3 Love you, "Debbie" (Donna Keller Barnes)

Donna Keller Barnes - July 15, 2018 at 01:34 AM



“ Judy, Jack and families, I want to extend my sympathy with prayers. Your Mother was such a sweet lady and I know she will be missed.

Carol Wonderlich - July 16, 2018 at 09:49 PM



“ Very nice lady. I remember her from younkers

Georgia - July 14, 2018 at 12:15 PM



“ Mabel was a beautiful and honorable person. Our condolences to her family. Cherol and Daryl Brown

Cherol & Daryl Brown - July 14, 2018 at 11:26 AM



“ A very special lady who touched so many lives♥Always enjoyed visiting with her♥
Love and prayers to her family♥

Mary Sandholdt - July 14, 2018 at 11:16 AM