

A Life Remembered...

Fern Arlene Kesterson was born May 2, 1919, to Arlo and Grace Rainey Kesterson at Tabor.

She died Feb. 8, 2016, at Valley View Village in Des Moines, 9 years to the day after she took residence there.

Fern was the fifth of seven children.

Fern loved school. She took the normal training course in high school and went on to receive her two-year teaching degree from Tabor College in 1939.

She started her teaching career in one-room schools in southwest Iowa.

In the summers she attended Simpson and Central colleges to work towards a bachelor's degree.

She was teaching at Shenandoah junior high and nearing her degree when one of her students introduced her to his big brother who was home on leave from the Navy.

Fern and Byron Ludington were married in secret in 1946 because her teaching contract forbid her to marry during the school year.

A baby boy named Jim soon joined the family. Fern and Byron opened a grocery store in Riverton where a daughter, Terri, was born.

The desire for more education couldn't be denied. Fern returned to school at Tarkio College in Missouri and received her bachelor's degree. Byron earned his degree, too, so there were two teachers in the family.

Fern taught for close to 30 years at Tabor, Ida Grove and finally at Story City where she retired in 1986.

She maintained her own love of learning and received a master's degree from Iowa State University in 1972.

Following Byron's death in 1965, Fern pursued many interests. She loved all kinds of crafts and made Christmas ornaments every year for her students and for her grandchildren when they arrived.

She traveled to Scandinavia and to Spain where Terri's husband Roger was stationed in the Navy.

Fern continued to teach through the "Big Buddies" program at the Story City Schools and received the "Friend of Education Award."

Fern was a member of the ISEA, the NEA, Delta Kappa Gamma, the Grace United Methodist Church and the Story City Historical Society.

Since 2007, Fern lived at Valley View Village in Des Moines.

Fern is survived by her son Byron J. "Jim" Ludington (Margaret) of Altoona and her daughter Terri (Roger) Messenger of Aberdeen, S. D., six grandchildren, Jennifer (Jeff) Fleming of Ankeny, Sarah (Brock) Everhart of Ohio, Rebecca (Ryan) Witt of Ames and Holly (Peter) Thompson of Ames, Jacob Ludington and Paul (Leisl) Ludington of Santa Cruz, Calif. and 15 great-grandchildren.

She preceded in death by her husband, her parents, her sister Marjory Brown and brothers Edwin, Russell "Pete", Gerald "Jim", Emil "Bud" and Andrew Kesterson.

Memorial contributions may be made to Grace United Methodist Church, PO Box 67, 624 Elm Ave., Story City, IA, 50248 or the Valley View Village Employee Assistance Fund, 2571 Guthrie Ave., Des Moines, IA, 50317.

In Loving Memory



Fern A. Ludington

1919 ~ 2016



Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes to the hills,
From whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the Lord,
Which made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved;
He that keepeth thee will not slumber.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel
Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is thy keeper;
The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil;
He shall preserve thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out
And thy coming in from this time forth,
And even forevermore.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Fern A. Ludington

May 2, 1919 ~ February 8, 2016

FUNERAL SERVICE

10:00 a.m. Thursday, February 11, 2016
Grandview Park Funeral Home

OFFICIATING

The Reverend McKinna Daugherty
Altoona Christian Church

PIANIST

David Kvernstoen

MUSIC

"It Is Well With My Soul"
"In The Garden"
"Because He Lives"
"On Eagle's Wings"

Please join the family in the lower level for
a reception following the service.

GRAVESIDE SERVICE

3:00 p.m. Thursday, February 11, 2016
Rose Hill Cemetery - Shenandoah, Iowa
The Reverend Rick Sleyster, Officiating