



Ada E. "Betty" Reynolds

September 6, 1913 - January 6, 2011

Ada Elizabeth (Betty) Buck Reynolds was born September 6, 1913 in Urbana, Illinois.. She passed away at Kindred Chicago Lakeshore Hospital in Chicago on January 6, 2011 after a two month illness. Mrs. Reynolds lived in Kankakee since 1960. She was married to the late Harold C. Reynolds, Jr. for 51 years until his death in August 1990. They had seven children. She is survived by William and his wife, Virginia, James, Thomas, David and his wife Irina, and Nancy and her husband, Adam Gaffin. She was preceded in death by her son, Peter, and her daughter, Kathleen.

Mrs. Reynolds grew up in Elizabeth, NJ and graduated in 1934 from Cornell University with a BS in Physics. During the Great Depression, her father said he could afford to send her to college for only three years, so that's how long she took. After graduation, she worked in Elizabeth, New Jersey, including at Addressograph-Multigraph, an early innovator of automatically addressing mail and embossing.

Betty became a First Class Girl Scout and earned a life saving certificate as a child and teen, two early accomplishments of which she was always proud. In 1938, Betty Buck met Harold Cady Reynolds at a church social. They were married until his death shortly before their 52nd wedding anniversary in 1990. She liked to claim that her raisin pie attracted his attention.

Mrs. Reynolds was the founder and first president of the Kankakee Valley Garden Club. She was a co-founder with her husband Harold of the Kankakee Valley Theater, performing in and directing in early productions. Never particularly fond of cooking, she preferred writing and directing instead. Her poetic version of "Hansel and Gretel" and her musical, "The Year Before Christmas for Mary and Joseph" were both hits. Her puppet theater box and her original plays are still remembered by her children, especially Nancy with whom she performed. She also conducted a Rhythm Band for the developmentally affected adults at Shapiro.

For the Newcomer's Club, Betty integrated new residents into the Kankakee community. In addition, she taught bridge at the bridge club, made hundreds of pictures for the camera club, painted dozens of pictures at the art league, winning many awards. Then combining skills, Mrs. Reynolds made her own wooden animals with a jigsaw for displays at garden shows. The family still has her exquisite silhouette pictures of children on a swing and another of a princess and a frog.

Music was Betty's forte, too. At the United Church of Christ, she sang in the choir as well as served as a deacon. A lifelong learner, Betty took up the harp in later years, having already played accordion and piano for decades. She also played the home organ and the vibraharp. Betty not only learned, but she taught. She was a substitute teacher in physics, chemistry and English. Mrs. Reynolds even did post-graduate work in studies of the mentally retarded.

Mrs. Reynolds, the daughter of Alonzo Morris Buck, Jr. and Ada Grace Adkins was born in Urbana, Illinois, where her father was a professor of electrical engineering at the University of Illinois. Her brother, Frederick, died when Betty was a baby, but she always liked to say that he had called her sister. Her father taught Betty and her sister, Dorothy Buck Berry, who predeceased Mrs. Reynolds, how to use power tools, take pictures and develop black and white

film.

Mrs. Reynolds moved from Illinois to New Jersey as a young girl and grew up there. Soon after her marriage, the newlyweds moved to Massachusetts, spending ten years in the Boston area before returning to New Jersey. The family moved to Illinois in 1960. She traveled to over 16 countries on four continents. The family still views her slide of exotic plants she made on her cruise to New Zealand. On that trip Betty and Harold spent a lot of time ballroom dancing – a past time which they were both fond of.

In addition to her children, Mrs. Reynolds is survived by her brother-in-law, H. Tom Nickse, grandchildren Linda, Larissa, Heather, Alan, Jason and Greta, six great grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. They will all miss her unique Christmas cards designed with a new poem and illustrations each year.

Funeral service will be on Monday, January 10, 2011 at 11:00 A.M. at Congregational United Church of Christ, 2861 Waldron Rd., Kankakee, IL where visitation will be from 10:00 until the 11:00 A.M. service. Burial will be in the Ridgebury cemetery in Ridgefield, CT. Arrangements by Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home in Kankakee.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 10. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Congregational United Church of Christ
2861 Waldron Road
Kankakee, IL 60901

Funeral Service

JAN 10. 11:00 AM (CT)

Congregational United Church of Christ
2861 Waldron Road
Kankakee, IL 60901

Tribute Wall

GG

“ *Rest in peace, we'll miss you grandma*

greta gaffin - January 11, 2011 at 04:30 PM

MH

“ *To Betty's family: I'm certain she will be missed. I'm personally grateful that she founded the Kankakee Valley Garden Club. She told me when she was trying to come up with a name for the garden club, her husband, Harold, said, "Don't make it the Kankakee Garden Club. Make it all inclusive of the Kankakee area. Make it the Kankakee Valley Garden Club." And so she did. She's probably taking pictures and identifying flowers in Heaven. Thanks, Betty, for the fond memories.*

Marie Hancock, past president of the garden club.

Marie Hancock - January 11, 2011 at 11:05 AM

TD

“ *My daughter, Amanda Diel Tangeman, and I have fond memories of Betty and her incredible energy. We knew her through the Congregational Church. We both treasure the wonderful cookbook she almost single-handedly put to gather as a fund-raiser for the church.*

Terry Toni Diel - January 10, 2011 at 04:56 PM

SG

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Painting field trips we always more fun when you were there.*



Shirley Goodell - January 10, 2011 at 11:28 AM

DC

“ To Betty's Family, My family and I send our sympathy. Your Mother was one of a kind, a great friend and neighbor. She gave so much to those around her, sharing tales, imparting knowledge and just plain fun in all the stories she loved to tell. The hours she spent visiting, sharing a cup of tea, playing with my Grandchildren, poking around at my yard sales, sharing her lily ponds and flowers with me, exchanging stories of bow shooting and even more long ago things she knew about. She will be long remembered as one of the best people I ever had the pleasure and honor of knowing. The neighborhood will never be the same. Lovingly remembered by Donna Cole, daughter & granddaughters..Tammi Bosman & Sidney, Shelby, & Summer, son & grandson...Matthew & Gage Denham



Donna Cole - January 09, 2011 at 02:42 PM

NB

“ To the family of Betty. Our condolence on the passing of Betty. We are sure she is now happy to be with Harold again.

Norman Barbara - January 08, 2011 at 11:43 AM