



Ermintrude "Trudy" Dickinson

June 9, 1923 - October 31, 2016

Ermintrude "Trudy" Dickinson, age 93, of Kankakee, passed away Monday, October 31, 2016 at her home.

She was born June 9, 1923 in Osceola, Texas, the daughter of Emmett & Anna Mae Mills Dickinson.

A native of Osceola, Texas, Trudy was a graduate of Itasca High School. Picking cotton was her motivation to seek formal education. She attended North Texas State University where she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1944 and a Master of Science Degree in 1946 with majors in chemistry and minors in biology and physics.

After two years in college in the midst of WWII, there was a great need for teachers. She left college to teach in high school. After one semester she returned to North Texas as a laboratory instructor in the U.S. Army Specialized Training Program.

She held positions as a Patent Librarian at Standard Oil Company of New Jersey in Houston, Research Enzymologist at Armour and Co. in Fort Worth and at Armour Laboratories in Chicago. She was also employed as Assistant Director of Biochemistry at Cook County Hospital in Chicago.

Trudy, Co-Founder and President of PENTEX INCORPORATED, was a producer of specialized biochemicals that located in Kankakee in 1956. She was also president of Midwest Pentex Sales Co., which was founded in Philadelphia in 1956.

Trudy was employed as Manager of the Kankakee plant while augmenting her

business knowledge with extension courses and night classes at the Illinois Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois.

(The three much older non-scientist investors/co-founders did not live to experience much of the early company struggles.)

Trudy became Plant Manager when the companies (PENTEX and Midwest Pentex Sales) were sold to Miles Laboratories in 1968. In the mid 1970's, she was transferred to corporate offices in Elkhart, Indiana as Worldwide Manager of Manufacturing and Distribution of Miles Research Division.

She held increasingly responsible positions with Miles including Director of Manufacturing for its Research Division plants in South Africa, Israel, England, as well as operational responsibility for U.S. plants in Indiana and Illinois.

Following the acquisition of Miles by the German firm, Bayer AG, she returned to Kankakee as the site Director of Operations where the Division's worldwide manufacturing and distribution operations had been consolidated as Miles Scientific Division.

Under her direction, the local plant achieved an ISO 9002 Certificate of Compliance, a quality standard from the International Organization of Standards of Geneva, Switzerland. The Kankakee plant was the first of Bayer's U.S. plants to earn this award and one of only 3,000 such plant awards in the U.S. at the time.

Trudy retired in 1995.

Civic and community interests include serving as Board Member for the United Way and The Salvation Army. She was a Director at Riverside Medical Center, City National and First of America Banks and a Trustee of North Central College, Provena Heritage Village, Melissa Day Care Center, and the YMCA Foundation. Other involvements included Kankakee County Chamber of Commerce and Illinois Manufacturers Association. She was twice President of the local Zonta Club and held District office as Area Director in Zonta International. She had been actively involved at St. Mark United Methodist Church.

Honors include the Athena Award (1989), Chamber of Commerce Business

Woman of the Year (1989), Honoree in the Harvard Business School Publication *The Woman MBA* (1976) and an Honorary Doctor of Business Administration (1991) from North Central College.

On November 21, 2014, Trudy received the Olivet Nazarene University Lifetime Achievement, the Reed Institute for Advanced Study of Leadership. She also received the Kankakee Community College 2016 Foundation Visionary Award.

Surviving are her special friends, Jean Thomas of Kankakee and Judy & Ron Golembiewski of Kankakee and Florida; one brother, John Dickinson of San Diego, CA; one sister-in-law, Margie Dickinson of Houston, TX; and three nieces, Lisa Watson, Susan DeChellis, and Laura Dickinson.

She is preceded in death by her parents; one brother, Emmett M. Dickinson; and one sister-in-law, Virginia Dickinson.

Visitation will be held 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Thursday, November 3, 2016 at Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home in Kankakee.

Visitation will also be held 10:00 a.m. until the 11:00 a.m. funeral service on Friday, November 4, 2016 at St. Mark United Methodist Church in Kankakee. Rev. Dalene Kuebler will officiate the service.

Interment will follow at Kankakee Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Aroma Township.

Memorials may be made to St. Mark United Methodist Church, YMCA, or Hospice of Kankakee Valley.

Cemetery Details

Kankakee Memorial Gardens

15 S. 3000 E. Rd.
Kankakee, IL 60901

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 3. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Kankakee - Clancy-Gernon-Hertz Funeral Home
1480 W. Court St.
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 932-1214
cgfuneral@gmail.com

Visitation

NOV 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mark United Methodist Church
1200 W. Calista
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 933-8621

Funeral Service

NOV 4. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mark United Methodist Church
1200 W. Calista
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 933-8621

Tribute Wall

DS

“ *Trudy was truly always a pleasure to talk and visit with. She will be greatly missed. Our condolences go out to Jean and Trudy's family.*
Dave & Margaret Sula

Dave Sula - November 05, 2016 at 06:10 PM

PB

“ *The world is a lesser place for Trudy's loss! She gave my father, mother and me many precious memories and experiences that I will always be so thankful for.*
May God bless her family and close friends who are grieving. May He uphold them and give them all the peace and love that was Trudy!
I'm sure Rev. Earl is giving her a warm, happy and loving greeting into God's house!

Pamela Bruso - November 03, 2016 at 02:38 PM

TH

“ *Trudy was a very special person in my life. Besides all her amazing accomplishments, she was humble and a wonderful supporter of women as well as a great role model. She was my father's first customer when he opened his business and she and Jean graciously entertained them when we visited Hawaii. She and Jean assisted with plans to celebrate my husband's parent's 50th wedding anniversary with a trip to Ravinia. She and Jean have been blessings to me in so many ways and I will miss her. My heart goes out to Jean. I am proud to have known her.*
Terri Hult

Terri Hult - November 02, 2016 at 10:28 PM

RM

“ I first met Trudy when she was named the Athena recipient by the Kankakee River Valley Chamber of Commerce, and she continued to impress and inspire me through the years with her humility, her grace, her kindnesses to so very many, and her business acumen. The loss of this fine lady to our community cannot be measured. My sympathy and condolences to Jean and her family and friends who I'm sure will feel her loss deeply and each day. May the shared memories bring more laughter than tears as the years go by until you meet again. God truly gained an angel and a soldier for his work.

Rose Devine Mitchell - November 02, 2016 at 08:29 AM