

Claire Catherine Stambaugh peacefully departed this earth May 14, 2015, at the age of 88. She had been a resident of the Dorsett Special Care Unit in Spearfish for the past 5 years.

Claire was born in Belle Fourche, SD, and raised on a farm/ranch between Spearfish and Belle Fourche with her two sisters and brother. Her parents, Ralph Wendelken and Anne Quarnberg Wendelken, began their family later in life. Perhaps in part at least, this contributed to the free rein Claire and her siblings enjoyed as they grew up exploring the rimrock above the Redwater River, rearranging the household furniture to make tents, and making many "unsupervised" excursions. The most notorious was a walk of a few miles to Belle with a lunch of canned beans planned. Unfortunately, the anticipated lunch ended with the unopened can of beans exploding over their campfire. Perhaps this independence allowed during childhood contributed to Claire's independence and love of learning as an adult. Her list of activities and interests included Master Gardener, geology, quilting, sewing, knitting, Elderhostel, woodworking, music (clarinet, piano, choir, New Horizons Band, Belle Fourche Cowboy Band), swimming, flower arranging, tutoring (neighborhood swim and piano teacher, adult reading program), and volunteer work (Hospice, Canyon Lake Senior Citizens gardener, kids fair, and Journey Museum).

Claire graduated from a three year nursing program at the Hamlin-Asbury Hospital School of Nursing at St. Paul, MN. Her roommate there, Marian Stambaugh, introduced Claire to her sailor brother, Maurice, and a month before she graduated on August 6, 1947, Claire married Maurice Stambaugh in a double wedding ceremony with her sister, MaryAnn and Jack Wells.

Claire and Maurice raised their five children, Sharon, Gerry, John, Randy, and Brian, on a dairy farm near Nisland, SD. Claire didn't work in her nursing career for 17 years as she raised her family. She then worked part-time at John Burns Hospital in Belle Fourche. After moving from the farm in 1971, her nursing career at various times included Rapid City Regional Hospital, a dermatology clinic, dialysis, and River Park Treatment Center.

Woven into all her other interests and activities was a love of the Black Hills. She went backpacking in the Black Hills with her grandkids at age 70 - no tent! Another adventure was tubing Rapid Creek with the grandkids at age 72. A beautiful garden, a walk through the Hills, a decorated sugar cookie, or a handful of just-picked berries will always remind us of Mom/Granny.

Survivors include her children, Sharon (Steve) Bostic, Mesa, AZ, Gerry (Ray) Dockter, Baldwin, ND, John (Robin) Stambaugh, Rapid City, SD, Randy (Kaye) Stambaugh, San Diego, CA, and Brian (Linda) Stambaugh, Newell, SD; one brother, Jim Wendelken, Littleton, CO; one sister, Mary Ann (Jack) Wells, Belle Fourche, SD; ten grandchildren; and fourteen great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Maurice; and one sister, Sara Horman.

A memorial has been established to Alzheimer's Association.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.

In Loving Memory Of



Claire Catherine Stambaugh

1926 ~ 2015



I'm Free

*Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God has laid you see.
I took His hand when I heard His call
I turned my back and left it all.*

*I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way
I found the peace at the close of day.*

*If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered joys - -
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss
Oh yes, these things I too will miss.*

*Be not burdened with times of sorrow.
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I savored much,
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.*

*Perhaps my time seemed all too brief - -
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your hearts, and peace to thee - -
God wanted me now: He set me free.*

In Loving Memory Of
Claire Catherine Stambaugh

Born
August 30, 1926
Belle Fourche, South Dakota

Died
May 14, 2015
Spearfish, South Dakota

Memorial Service
Monday, May 18, 2015, at 10:00 a.m.
United Church of Christ
Belle Fourche, South Dakota

Officiant
Pastor Jeff Otterman

Pianist ~ Ellie Lawton

Soloist ~ Emily Stambaugh

Musical Selections
"On Eagle's Wings" "How Great Thou Art"
"In The Garden"

Urn Bearer
Danny Stambaugh

Honorary Bearers
All Grandchildren

Inurnment
Pine Lawn Memorial Park
Rapid City, South Dakota

*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch in the
church hall immediately following the memorial service.
We thank you for your presence and condolences.*