

Arlene Mortensen Ennis was born August 6, 1925, the daughter of Burt and Viola Fees in Wall, South Dakota. She grew up on a farm near Cottonwood, SD, attended a rural school and graduated from Cottonwood High School. She received her teaching degree from Black Hills State College in Spearfish, SD. She taught school in Jackson County for several years.

In 1946 she was united in marriage to Morten Mortensen. Five children were born to this union: Linda, Dale, Cheryl, Gerald (Jerry) and Sharon. They owned and operated a grocery store in Cottonwood, SD. In 1949 they sold the store and moved to Faith, SD. There they managed a Texaco Station. In 1954 they moved to Kenel, SD where they again managed a grocery store, gas station and post office. In 1956 they moved to Sturgis, SD where Mort was employed at the Veteran's Hospital at Ft. Meade.

Arlene was a member of Grace Lutheran Church, American Legion Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, RSVP, Sturgis Senior Center, Learn, Chat & Eat Extension Club and Good Sam Camping Club. Arlene cared for children of working parents in her home while her children were young. Later she worked at Weimer's Bakery, J C Penney Store and A and J Clothing. She enjoyed numerous crafts, especially crocheting baby afghans for Great Grandchildren, volunteering at the Senior Thrift Shop, quilting at the Church and working in her garden and flowers. She was an accomplished seamstress from making wedding dresses to grandkids clothes and doll clothes.

Mort passed away in 1986 and in 1988 Arlene married Edgar Ennis. They lived in Boulder Canyon and in 1990 moved to Pleasant Valley, in 1995 they moved to Sturgis. Since Edgar was a musician and owned a variety of instruments, he gave Arlene lessons on playing the drums. Edgar and Arlene volunteered many hours at nursing homes in Sturgis and Rapid City providing musical enjoyment. They also played for Senior Citizen Dances.

Edgar and Arlene enjoyed traveling and went on several bus tours. They took cruises to Alaska and the Caribbean. They also made many trips in their motor home visiting friends and relatives and enjoying beautiful scenery.

After Edgar's death, Arlene continued to live in their home until 2009 when she moved to an apartment in Heritage Acres. In her last years she lived in an assisted living apartment at Arrowhead Manor in Rapid City and later at Clarkson Nursing Home also in Rapid City.

Grateful for having shared her life are three daughters, Linda (Jerry) Ross, Cheryl (Greg) Wierenga, Sharon (Christ) Hinsz all of Rapid City, SD. Also surviving are two sons, Dale (Liz) Mortensen of Georgetown, Texas and Jerry (Cindy) Mortensen of Bernalillo, NM., fourteen grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren. She also has three great-great grandchildren. Also surviving are six step children and their spouses, 17 step grandchildren, 15 step great grandchildren and I great great grandchild.

In addition to her husbands, she was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Clifford Fees and one granddaughter Denise Ross.

In Loving Memory



Arlene Elmona Ennis

August 6, 1925 ~ May 11, 2025

A Mother's Farewell to Her Children

When I must leave you, for a little while,
Please do not grieve, and shed wild tears,
And hug your sorrow to you through the years.
But start out bravely with a gallant smile.
And for my sake and in my name,
Live on and do all things the same.
Feed not your loneliness on empty days,
But fill each waking hour in useful ways.
Reach out your hand in comfort and cheer,
And I in turn will comfort you and hold you near.
And never, never be afraid to die,
For I am waiting for you in the sky!

In Loving Memory Of

Arlene Elmona Ennis

Born

August 6, 1925
Wall, South Dakota

Died

May 11, 2025
Rapid City, South Dakota

Funeral Service

Tuesday, May 20, 2025 at 11:00 am
Kinkade Funeral Chapel
Sturgis, South Dakota

Officiant

Pastor Kevin Jensen

Musical Selections

"I Can Only Imagine"
"How Great Thou Art"

Pallbearers

Brian Ross, Steve Ross, Erik Grabow,
Cory Larson and Evan Dalrymple

Honorary Pallbearers

All Grandchildren

Final Resting Place

Black Hills National Cemetery
Sturgis, South Dakota