

The Life of Alice May Schmoll-Sell-Huffman

Her story starts on a small dry land farm in Bon Homme County, SD. On April 14, 1924, baby Alice May was born to Frederick Schmoll, son of German immigrants and Katherine Tierney-Schmoll, daughter of an Irish family from Camp Douglas, Wi. Alice was confirmed at Saint John's Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) in Tyndall, SD, May 28, 1939. She attended small country schools and graduated from Tyndall High School on May 22, 1942.

The World War II year, 1943, was a big year in her life. She completed her teaching endorsement earning "The Regents of Education Diploma" from South Dakota Southern State Normal School on May 28. A young man, also of German-Irish descent had been pursuing her for some time and on June 18 they were wed in Tyndall SD. She joined her new husband, Ben Elliott Sell on the Buchman farm between Tyndall and Avon.

They farmed this small rental farm for five years during which time she gave birth to her first son, Loran Ben Sell born Feb 18, 1945. With a new family they began looking for more ground to farm so in 1947 purchased 410 acres, three miles west of Springfield, SD. They toiled together on their new farm for nine years where they welcomed three more boys to the family: Russell John (Nov, 22, 47), Stephen Carl (July, 20, 51) and Rodney William (May 2, 54).

Poor crops and a longing for a different life prompted them to start a big new adventure. Two of Ben's sisters lived near Salem, OR. They invited him to visit and explore the possibilities on the west coast. During the visit Alice's cousin offered Ben a job in the grocery store that he was buying. Ben returned home, purchased a 2 wheel trailer to hold a freezer full of meat and food, and packed it with as many belongings that would fit. In January, 1956, they loaded their 4 boys and Tippy, the dog, into the 1952 Mercury and headed west.

Unfortunately, before they arrived in Salem the store purchase fell through. A friend of the family allowed them to work off some of the rent for a house he had just built in Keizer. When in a strange land, do as the locals do – They both went to work in the local food canneries. While that was sufficient to get them through the summer it was only temporary work. A neighbor worked for Oregon State Highway and helped Ben get a job with the highway department.

The State Highway was solid employment, but moved them to several different locations. Over the next 23 years they moved to Alsea, Sweet Home, Halsey and Albany before finally locating back in Sweet Home where they retired.

While raising her boys, Alice was a dedicated mother and homemaker. She occupied her spare time and supplemented family income by operating the Bulldog Confectionary, the bowling alley café, Day and Night deli and working at Sprouse- Reitz, a five and dime store. Her favorite activities were square dancing, bowling and playing pinochle with their long time neighbors and friends the Cotes. When the dams were completed near Sweet Home, they purchased an inboard/outboard boat to start fishing and pulling their boys on water skis. Fishing and traveling to Arizona as snow birds provided them an active and enjoyable retirement. They would travel to Apache Junction, AZ in the winters and worked at Diamond Lake Resort in central Oregon during the summers.

Retirement was good to them until that fateful day in February 1987, when Ben had a motorcycle accident in the desert. He passed away in Phoenix hospital on February 16, 1987. Losing the love of her life was a big blow to Alice, but through her determination and with the help of her boys she was able to continue her Arizona life. She sold her home in Albany and purchased a condo on S. Jackson in Albany where she lived until 2016.

Alice was lucky enough to find love again. On July 1, 1991 she married James Huffman from Quincy, WA. They continued the snow bird life together traveling between Apache Junction and her condo in Albany. They both loved to travel so he accompanied her to her 50th high school reunion the 4th of July weekend in 1992. They also traveled throughout the Midwest as well as to Alaska and Australia.

Another major loss in her life was when Jim was diagnosed with cancer in 1999. He passed away in Albany on July 10, 1999. Once again through her determination and the help of her family she was able to continue traveling between Apache Junction and Albany until 2010.

A combination macular degeneration, broken hips and a failing heart caused her to give up, first her driver's license, and then her condo to move into independent living at Albany Bonaventure in 2017. She managed all of her own affairs until only recently moving into assisted living. Alice quietly passed into Christ's arms on her 80th wedding anniversary to Ben, June 18, 2023, joining both Ben and Jim.

Alice was preceded in death by her parents; her husbands, two brothers, her sister and daughter-in-law, Lisa Asken.

Alice is survived by her sons and daughters: Loran and Peggy, Russell and Brenda, Stephen, and Rodney and Raylene; her grandchildren and their spouses: Nannette Naught, Jason Sell, Loran Paul Sell, Kristin Lee, Becky Sell, Stacey Shank, Brady Sell, Allison Swanson, Cody Sell, Terah Haslip, Benjamin Sell and Christine Davies; and 15 great-grandchildren.

Alice: Mom, Grandma, Great Grandma and friend was a very special person and will live on in our hearts forever.



In Our Hearts Forever Alice May Huffman



April 14, 1924 ~ June 18, 2023

In Loving Memory of
Alice May Huffman

Age 99

Born

April 14, 1924
Tyndall, South Dakota

Entered into Rest

June 18, 2023
Albany, Oregon

Graveside Service

Tuesday June 27, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.
Willamette Memorial Park Cemetery
Albany, Oregon

Officiant

Pastor Sena Norton

Honorary Casket Bearers

Jason Sell, Loran Paul Sell, Brady Sell,
Son Lee, Cody Sell, Ryan Swanson,
Jeremy Shank, Benjamin Sell, David Haslip

Special Songs

“Will the Circle Be Unbroken”

Performed by Alice’s family

“Amazing Grace”

Performed by Alice’s family

“Little Brown Church in the Vale”

Reading

Psalm 23, King James - Caleb Sell
Revelation 21:1-4 - Elizabeth Sell

“Will the Circle Be Unbroken”

Will the circle be unbroken,

Bye and bye Lord, bye and bye.

There’s a better home a waiting,

In the sky, Loran in the sky.