



Goodnight Irene

If ever there was a woman
Who took all that life could give
She followed her heart, and acted smart
Now that's the way to live.

Chorus:

Good night Irene, Good Night Irene
I'll see you in my dreams

Never backed down a challenge,
She'd just build it herself
Or see it gets done, she is the one
And knowing her is our wealth

Chorus

A farm girl who moved to the city
There's not much that she couldn't do
Social work, building, Capitol Hill,
And, yes, a good mother too.

Chorus

Now this old house has grown old
She lived a life, rich and long
In jewels bedecked, she left us
We love her and sing this song.

Chorus

Adapted by Debra and Hannah Glass
Played and sung at Irene's Celebration of Life
With Elliot Glass on the drums

Senator Milton Young

My name is Terry Olson and I worked with Irene in Senator Milton Young's office. I remember when she came in for an interview and the earrings she was wearing – one said IN and the other said OUT. What confidence to wear something like that to an interview! Of course, by the time Irene worked for Senator she had already had successful ventures.

I always said Ed and Irene were the perfect couple to visit – if you wanted a quiet lunch or wanted to watch a sporting event on TV you stayed with Ed. If you wanted to rush around and do a variety of things at break-neck speed, you went with Irene,

After attending a "Young Girl's Luncheon", Irene arrived home in a rainstorm - in order not to get her yellow silk suit wet, she took it off in the car and ran to the front door in her underwear!

Irene was always up for adventure and a good time – all the while smiling, being positive, generous, and kind to all. She will be missed.

Terry Olson

Humor

Irene was one of those people who could light up a room. When she entered, her infectious smile made everyone there feel good and smile, too.

Irene would be stylishly dressed with everything matching. Even her colorful sneakers would match her outfit. Her jewelry was the frosting on her entire outfit. How beautiful she would look.

One couldn't help but enjoy Irene's sense of humor. No matter what the conversation was, she could find something to add that would bring about a laugh or two.

Like Irene, I grew up on a farm. Farming was much different then. It was fun for us to recall, 'the good old days'. Call them what one chooses, but they weren't ideal. However, they were wholesome, slower paced years without the hustle-bustle of worldliness- a time when terrorism was unheard of - a more peaceful time! We were lucky to live when we did.

Irene accomplished much in her life time. What a role model! She surely is one of the most interesting people I have ever met. To know her was to love her!

Vernice B Platt

Funny Times

Irene sent so many postcards and notes. We had so much fun together when she lived on Berkley Street. When she was pregnant with Geoff she always made all her doctor appointments on Sat. so I would be able to go with her. After she saw the doctor we would head for Georgetown and spend the afternoon shopping or mostly just looking around. Lots of fun we had.

She was always a happy person and a funny one at times. I will never forget my mother telling me she had gone over to Irene's house and knocked on the door. Irene called out, "Come on in. We are in the bathroom – you can come in here." Mother went to the bathroom and there she was in the tub with Becky and Pupdog, all naked. A sight to see Mother said!

She always loved seeing my pretty clothes. When I would come home from work Pupdog would run across the street and pee on my shoes. So I started taking my shoes off in the car. Funny times!

Betty Heaney

Blessed

The Hamme Family was blessed by the love and friendship of Irene and family, which went back to the time they lived in North Dakota. We always enjoyed her visits with us in PA. We so appreciated the reunion that she organized in 2000 in Edgeley. Our prayers are with her family and friends.

Judy Grim, daughter of Mary Jane Hamme Grim and Claude Grim

Memories of Irene Olson Glass

The Kirmis family moved to Medberry, North Dakota, in the summer of 1936 and it was about two years later Martin Fevold told our Dad about Willowgrove Church. Our family of seven---- Father, Mother, brother and four sisters--- found it to be very friendly and we were members until 1950.

The Olsons were members of the church and our family became good friends and admirers of the Olson family. I looked forward to Irene's visits although I was ten years younger than Irene. She always was very friendly to us Kirmis girls.

When I was in grade school Mrs. Belle Bartle was the Sunday School teacher of our class of boys and girls. One Sunday I posed the following question. "What does Virgin Mother mean?" She looked at me and said, "I think you should ask your mother". Evidently it wasn't very important at the time and I forgot to ask my mother. When I was older, Irene was the substitute teacher. This certain Sunday there were only girls in the class and I asked Irene the same question. There was no hesitation and she said, "That is a girl who is not married." Now I knew what a Virgin Mother was.

For some reason or other my sister, Genell, and I became monitors of boyfriends she brought to church when she visited her parents. Even though we didn't know too much about these boyfriends, we still had our "druthers." Finally, when she brought Ed Glass to church we approved!

Through the years I have followed Irene's numerous careers and have kept in contact with Irene and her family. I will always remember her positivism and her smile. She left an indelible mark in my life ---- a very happy, positive one.

Kathryn Kirmis Medellin

High Fashion

I always felt grateful when Irene was able to join my Friday morning exercise class with the Young at Heart Seniors. She seldom said much but her twinkling eyes and easy smile spoke volumes.

She was a 'fashion statement' in every sense of the word! How I admired her bright, bold, and beautiful outfits with perfectly matching accessories (right down to her colorful sneakers!) That girl had style!

It was clear she lived life passionately and to the fullest. I have no doubt she was a woman to be reckoned with in her day! Had I known her then I am certain we would have been great friends who shared many adventures together. For Irene Glass, the "glass" was always "half full!"

I am sure that the celebration continues in heaven! Thank you, Irene, for blessing my life with your kindness, grace, and beauty. Rest in peace, my friend.

With love and gratitude, Lori McEvoy

Compassionate

We only knew Irene for a short time while she was "care giving" our father, Bob Hall, in Seattle. We had fun shopping and she was always so appreciative of nail care.

Irene was such an accomplished lady. It was a treat to get to know her. Her pride and joy was her children and grandchildren. We know she will be missed.

Jeannie and Bill (Hall) Schwaab

Making the Most of Life

Irene was truly a wonderful woman. She was a great encourager to me. When I finished my Associate Degree and wished to go on for the Bachelors she encouraged me in a variety of ways. I am so glad I obtained that goal for eventually it led me into the ministry and to my Master's Degree.

I remember being at her house on the 4th of July and there was a neighborhood parade. Irene pulled out an assortment of hats and we had so much fun wearing those hats. That event caused me to obtain my own collection of hats that I used throughout my years of ministry. Wearing silly hats always transformed the moment into one of fun for both young and old. And that was the essence of Irene for me. She knew how to enjoy life and how to get others to do the same.

Jo Ellen Hetherington (a college roommate of Becky)

Feeling Special

Irene was one of the nicest people I have ever met. She was a true lady, always kind, always pretty, and always interested in the lives of others. I first met her when Connor, Cooper, Geoff, and Brent were young. She was happy to share memories of her travel adventures with me.

She was so happy to see the work her children and grandchildren do and so proud of them all. The second time I met her, she introduced me to someone else as 'her best friend'. I felt so special.

Becky, you are the best daughter ever to have taken such good care of her in her final years. Jimmy was the best son-in-law. Everyone should be so lucky!

Sue and Greg Carlson

(Sue is a fellow horsewoman of Becky's)

Remembrances

The Henry and Bessie Olson family were very special to our family. When the Kirmis family moved to Medberry, ND, and began attending the Willow Grove Church the Olsons accepted us as one of them.

As the youngest in our family I received a lot of attention and was very fond of Irene. Her smile and voice could win anyone over!

I loved to see what she would be wearing when she came home from college. She even gave my sisters and me clothes to wear for 'dress-up'. I remember a pair of platform heels that had colored studs around the base of the shoes. Even though they were much too large I always tried to be the first to put them on for whatever we were pretending to dramatize.

One year my parents, Frank, and our daughter, Kara, a one and a half year old, and I drove to Maryland to participate in the Delmarva National Cooking Contest. Both my mother and I were representing North Dakota. We were close to D.C. so we visited Irene and Ed. I recall Irene's flare for building and decorating houses and all that she did to make things happen. She mentioned if a door was to always remain open she would not paint behind the door – saved paint and labor!!!!

We had a whirlwind tour of D.C. by car. I rode with Irene and Frank and my parents followed. Frank had a hard time following because she would zip in and out of traffic.

Ed arranged for us to visit the FBI building and while parked there Frank got a parking ticket. She immediately grabbed it and said Ed would take care of it. We had a wonderful time with the two of them.

I don't recall a Christmas without receiving a card with all the news and pictures of her family. Her visits to Edgeley are cherished memories. She will always have a special place in my heart.

Bickey Kirmis Bender

Remembering Irene

A short time after Judy was diagnosed with lymphoma, Auntie Rena invited us down to Florida for a visit. She said she wanted to do everything Judy requested plus she would throw in the warm Florida beach. How could we pass that up living in Connecticut and enduring the cold waters of Long Island Sound each summer.

Irene lived in West Palm Beach where she designed and built her house along with several others. She was thrilled to have us visit and show off her houses.

It was a pleasant time of year when we visited so it was not the heat of summer, nor was it chilly. As the date neared for our departure from Hartford, CT to Fort Lauderdale, the oral chemotherapy that Judy was taking each month was not controlling the swelling in her left leg and indicated that IV chemotherapy would be needed. The first IV treatment was scheduled for the day before we were to leave for Florida. Irene had purchased the tickets and Judy was determined to go. Judy came home exhausted after the treatment and we went to bed early. Our flight the next day was very early. Irene met us with a wheelchair. But Judy felt good and excited and relieved to be in warm sunny Florida for a vacation. She walked out of the airport and off we went with Aunt Irene – always a pleasure and a fun time.

Judy wanted to see the lions and other African animals running free in a park in southern Florida not far from West Palm Beach. People stayed in cars or buses while the animals were free to roam in the specific environment. The rhinoceros were very large and impressive and a bit scary – they were as big as a car and could easily destroy it. The giraffes were fascinating and the elephants wonderful. The lions were lying around in the afternoon heat. It was a marvelous day and Judy was so pleased that her number one wish had been granted. Judy felt that no matter what

happened, she could always rely on Irene. How true that turned out to be. Our next adventure was a drive down to Flamingo in the Florida Everglades for a boat trip to see the dolphins – another trip on Judy's wish list. We happened to be on a boat with a lot of six-year-old girls and their fathers. As the dolphins jumped out of the water to get a better view of all of us the girls started counting them. They were up over a hundred not realizing that they were counting the same dolphins as they swam through the waves. It was fun for all and we helped corral all the girls into the Ladies' room after the boat ride as the fathers stood outside and waited.

One of my favorite memories is the side trip we took to view the largest mahogany trees in North America. It was impressive and a delight to take photos of each other in front of it.

Then it was off for a day at the beach. Irene drove us up to Jupiter and we rented an umbrella for the day at the Hilton down close to the ocean. It was a gorgeous Florida day, the water was clear and warm, and the sunshine a joy. What a day and a delight for Judy.

We spent a day touring Palm Beach and the magnificent Norton Museum of Art and some of the houses that were open to the public. Irene also took us to see her church where she worked with many other women to make sandwiches for hundreds of homeless people in the area. Always generous and thoughtful, it fit with her persona. We walked down Worth St. to view all the fancy shops, but our favorite was the thrift shop with a big giraffe statue out front. The shop was tucked back from the street amidst palm trees and hard to find, but Aunt Irene always knew where the bargains were.

Two other trips remain forever in my mind about Irene. While she was living in Falls Church, Virginia, she invited us down to visit for the weekend. We rode the train from New Haven to D.C. She picked us up at the train station on a cold February afternoon

in 1980. Irene was working in the office of one of the senators from North Dakota at the time. We got a grand tour of his office, the Capitol and into areas not generally open to the public. It was a thrill to sit in the balcony overlooking the Senate floor.

We had planned to go back on Monday but a blizzard hit and we stayed for a few extra days. There was nowhere to go and it was just marvelous to sit and watch the snow come down and chat with Irene.

In the early summer of 1989 as Judy's health began to decline, we met Irene and Evelyn at Hyde Park, NY, to tour the Roosevelt House and Museum. They were in the area traveling and invited us to meet them. Judy was wearing a wig because most of her hair had fallen out, but she was able to walk through the grounds and take the tour. Irene was supportive as usual. On Sept 1 when Judy went into the hospital with pneumonia I called Irene and she flew immediately to New Haven. She was a steady rock for both of us so many times and always there when Judy needed her.

In gratitude and appreciation,
Sandy Murphree, friend

Wonderful Memories

As I think of how precious Irene always was to us, I remember how often she talked about her children, and later, her grandchildren. She loved Becky and Geoff so very, very much, and was extremely proud of both of them. She and Ed were almost breathless as they announced the arrival of their grandchildren. I still remember giving Irene the two little outfits for Becky's twin boys. Each outfit had a little pastel emblem on it. Ed noticed the emblems and later asked me if they represented two famous sports players. He must have examined the outfits carefully to notice that. He was so happy. Two grandsons! When they were about five or six, he proudly told me what little hellions they were. We had a good laugh about that. It was wonderful to finally meet the grandchildren at Irene's birthday party. They are such lovely, lovely young people. Sparkling with intelligence, kindness, and charm—so adorable. I always smile whenever I think of Irene in the loving care of Becky and Geoff and their families.

In pictures with Ed and Irene, Van and I are always laughing or smiling. We found them endlessly amusing and loved their graciousness and humorous viewpoints. Becky and Geoff have their wit. I can still hear Ed telling me, "We now have another Irene – Hannah Irene." And then a third grandson, Elliot! I think they had given up on grandchildren, when suddenly they had four. And did they ever win the grandchildren lottery with those four.

Becky and Geoff made their parents so happy. Irene loved helping Becky with her "old house with the wavy floors." She loved helping design Becky's beautiful new home. I remember her pride when Becky made tenure in New York and when Geoff became a judge. They both fulfilled so many of their lifetime dreams. They were so proud and happy whenever they talked about them.

Some days I am back at PGA National, and Ed is feeding saltines to the ducks or sand hill cranes at the side door on their home on Carlisle Ct. Our little Dale, my golden retriever, would run over to say hello. She just adored him, and would light up all over whenever she saw him. After a joyful hello, she would run right back home. She knew a wonderful person when she met one. I see Ed smiling and talking to me across our yards as he watched her run back home.

We gave Ed all the best golf balls we found with logos on them. They would gather like hidden Easter Eggs at the base of the hedge on the golf course. We stored them in egg cartons for him. He thought that was funny but he really liked them. I don't think golfers ever have enough golf balls!

Ed was at the bar in his music room, making me a scotch and water, and teasing me for making one drink last all evening. Now he was sitting next to me at dinner in our home. He was asking if those are almonds in the green beans. I was always amazed at how he didn't miss a thing. He was always very observant.

Now we are all around the player piano, singing "Tammy". Irene says, "I don't know that song." I told her about the Debbie Reynolds and Sandra Dee movies. It was the only time I can remember Irene looking at me, thinking, "I have no idea what you are talking about." We sang and sang. She told me she used to do this with Becky and Geoff when they were younger, with Becky in charge of the piano.

Irene, Van and I were sitting at her little game table eating brunch. Their home was filled with happy people, enjoying the delicious Easter brunch of ham and scrambled eggs with cheese. The menu includes every good thing you can imagine. She had made sure everyone was served and seated, and finally came to the little table she had reserved for just the three of us. I went item by item and pointed out how lovely and special everything was. The china was multicolored and most beautiful, Mexican or Polish with bright bold colors. The beautiful table had a chess board

embedded in the top. For a few moments the world was perfect. Irene had a special talent for creating these perfect moments.

It was Christmas Eve at Spence and Rene's gorgeous new home in Admiral's Cove. Ed was telling jokes and had us in stitches. Irene was helping Rene with last minute disasters. Irene to the rescue!

Irene had been employed to inspect many of the new homes being built at Admiral's Cove. She made a list of anything that needed the builder's attention. These were magnificent homes, and Irene was just the person to give the final review.

Another Christmas, Ed, Irene, Van and I attended the midnight service at the Royal Poinciana Chapel in Palm Beach. We sat next to the CEO of Florida Power and Light. Irene told him to give me a job! Before the service we toured the historic Henry Flagler home, Gull Cottage, located on the grounds of the chapel. Irene was our tour guide as it was her company that beautifully renovated the cottage. The government officials also asked her to renovate the train station in West Palm Beach, but she felt that would be too big of a job. She suggested to the Chapel staff that the offering should be suspended for Christmas Eve. However, she changed her mind when she learned it was their largest collection every year (around \$25,000 in one service!)

I learned so many things and meet so many interesting people when I was with Irene. Irene traveled to Russia with Helen Boehm and Armand Hammer in her group. She met Gorbachev and his wife at the ball. Mrs. Gorbachev was wearing a lovely satin gown that deeply wrinkled as the evening wore on. Irene felt sorry for her wardrobe malfunction. Later she described for us the children who wore dresses with full skirts and large sashes tied in a bow, old fashioned elegance. Irene shared her signed copy of Helen Boehm's autobiography. What a treat!

We played Trivial Pursuits. Oh, I hoped Ed would be on my team. He knew the answers to all and I mean all the sports

questions. Irene knew all the geography answers. She had traveled the world with her beloved sister. They seemed to especially enjoy cruises. She went off to cruise through the Panama Canal. Then she was leaving on a Transatlantic cruise. I think it was on one of the Cunard queen ships, the QE2. Ed told us that he wasn't fond of cruises, saying, "Every day the ship got smaller." He and Irene had such a way with words. We laughed and laughed.

We were walking over to a neighbor's house with Ed and Irene. There was a party. Irene looked very beautiful, dressed in shades of aqua, teal, and blue. The silky material fluttered in the light breeze. The sun was setting, and as we walked toward it, Irene was lit up in an early sunset glow. I asked her, "Have you always been so beautiful?" She loves a party!

Irene had me in stitches of laughter when she came to my door dressed in a black dress, white apron, and a hat. She was handing out apples from a large basket. She was visiting all of the neighbors. We laughed as she described their reactions, particularly the one serious, but very likable, male neighbor who was home alone at the time. He had been to her home and knew her to be a lovely person. But he was so confused by it all. I think she brought some fun and fancy into his life that day.

Ed told another Irene adventure. One time she used tape to make herself appear younger when she went to the airline offices to apply for a job as a stewardess. Go for it Irene! We still chuckle about this. Ed thought it was so amusing. We all looked at the innocent Irene and laughed and congratulate her on her craftiness and courage.

Ed and Irene worried about their construction workers. They didn't worry about them getting the work done. They worried about their personal lives and if they were okay.

One lovely night we were all sitting on the grass listening to the symphony orchestra that was playing at the PGA National Hotel. The world was transformed as we were under the spell of the music. I'm not sure how much Ed and Irene heard as everyone seemed to know them and came to greet them.

Young female guests from England came to stay with them. Irene came to show me some of their handiwork. They had laundered and ironed all of Irene's beautiful linens, including her many types of napkins. We were both completely charmed by their thoughtfulness.

One day I was driving home from work when I saw Irene's yellow Mercedes stopped on the side of the road. She and a man are peering under the hood. I stopped to ask if she needed help. This was the first time I had ever seen Irene feeling a bit frazzled! But she quickly relaxed when she saw I was on the job, ready to help her. She needed a ride home, but when she looked around the interior of my car she patted the dark blue velvet seats. "You know, this is a really nice car." Irene told me that Rene's son told her that her car 'sucked'.

Over and over, I found that Irene and I liked the same things (except dogs). She said that Becky felt the same way about her dogs.

When I was promoted to senior manager for Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Services, Irene told me that she was a social worker in her first career. When I sent her a Methodist cookbook I learned that she too had been raised a Methodist. She loved the book as it reminded her of the Methodist cookbooks in her past. She knew the truth of Garrison Keeler's remark - "as thin as a dishtowel in a Methodist kitchen".

She told about a young Becky wearing her hair in a long blond Braid down her back. What a lovely memory for her.

Another “only Irene” memory: We were at Ed and Irene’s for a party. I brought a dish with some serving pieces which I left at her house. A few days later I find the serving pieces on the front seat of my car. There wasn’t a note but I interpreted her gesture to say, “I didn’t want to bother you but I did want to return these as soon as possible. Thank you for the ride, and I like your car.” Irene, you precious, clever sweetie.

When we were moving to Connecticut I had been living on Hershey’s kisses and iced tea for two days while the movers packed the entire house. On moving day I had terrible chest pains and was rushed to the hospital. It was just acid reflux caused by my diet so I was sent home. When I arrived home, everything was packed and loaded on the truck, including our cars, and it was all on the way. Irene had called to check on us and then came over and oversaw the entire move. Even after the move we continued to stay in touch.

It was priceless spending time with Irene at her 90th birthday party. When I saw her she said excitedly, “I know these people.” She couldn’t quite place us until later the clouds and fog rolled away and she remembered us. She was completely relaxed and her whole demeanor changed. I had my dear friend back with that adventurous look in her eyes, and we had a wonderful time talking with her. We sat without words at times and just enjoyed being together.

We did so many grand activities with Ed and Irene, together and separately: Charity luncheons, the Breakers Hotel, the Palm Beach Club or the oceanfront Palm Beach Bath and Tennis Club. These functions were often for the Hearts of Gold fund raisers to send children to camp or as founding members of the Palm Beach Salvation Women’s Auxiliary. We worked together for many years at the Salvation Army Angel Tree and Christmas toy and food events.

We ate at luxurious restaurants, met Arnold Palmer, and had many other rewarding and wonderfully exciting activities. There are so many large and small memories close to our hearts.

Sara and Van Fehr, neighbors and friends

Aunt Irene

“Aunt Irene!” Just saying that brings a smile to my face. I have such fond memories of this wonderful lady. She was always full of sunshine and fun and lots and lots of laughter. She was an inspiration to me as a woman who could achieve and run her own business. No matter where she was she was never out of place and could become friends with a total stranger in just minutes. Everywhere she looked she looked at people as her friends even when she didn't know them. She was so kind, so generous, always looking for fun things to do, and loved to go shopping and to garage sales.

I think I rode with Irene and Evelyn down to Dave and Joan's wedding. Now that was a fun ride! I believe that was the occasion but it can't be verified any longer. Mom was the go to person to verify everything!

I remember when I brought my 3 sons and one of their friends to Florida to visit her and Ed. It was nonstop action. Just being in her home there was such warmth and friendliness. I believe the year was 1996 – the year I got divorced.

Irene had all these hats in a box and I have pictures of the boys wearing all these different funny hats and dressing in costumes. Ed was there and we had so much fun at breakfast just sitting around chatting. That is when Irene and Ed taught the boys to do the raspberry. Geoff or Becky must know what that means!

She took me shopping at the outlet mall and bought me 3 dresses that I still have to this day. Irene and I shared a room and we talked and laughed late into the night. Her house was marvelous and I loved her doll room.

Another trip we took to see Irene was for her 80th birthday. Wow, that was 18 years ago – must have been 1999. The boys would have been 21, 18, and 17. My, how time flies. She and Ed were living in California then and we got to stay with Geoff and

Deborah. We surprised her for her birthday. Where she lived and was having the party the boys had to wear a sport coat. None of them had one so we came up with some from Geoff or Ed so we could get them into the dining room for her birthday party. They were definitely a little big but they were allowed in.

She took us all over Laguna Beach sightseeing. It was definitely a very fun trip. When we were getting ready to go she gave me an envelope. I opened it when we were on the plane. She had given me enough money to pay for the flight out there and back. Who does that? Irene, that's who.

Irene also gave me a white leather motorcycle jacket from a friend of hers from Europe as I recall. That jacket inspired me to ride a motorcycle. I had one for a few years but have since given that up.

Irene filled me with positivity! She was always upbeat. I think she rubbed off on my son Ryan who has his own carpentry business and is also super positive and upbeat. She pretty much rubbed off on anyone she met. Despite her poor health towards her later years she almost always wore a smile. Will miss her so much!

Her niece, Teri

Auntie Rena

Once upon a time....when Pat and Phyllis were little girls Auntie Rena would ride the bus from Fargo to Tower City for the weekend....how we loved that. At evening time we would go to the gas station for her to go back to Fargo. One night Dad, Uncle Herb to her, helped her cross the snowy area in front of the bus....but the bus started to goand then the driver spotted her red coat. My mother, Marvel, and us girls would do things together during the day. In the evenings there would be a Chinese Checker game or two. Some weekends we would drive to Edgeley to visit Grandpa and Grandma Olson,

She wore pretty jewelry which fascinated us. There was always adventure when she was around.

Dean's comment "She was so fun".

There are stories of how she and Grandpa Olson would load up the machinery in the truck and drive to Horace to put in the crop and again in the fall return to harvest the crop.

One of my favorite stories occurred in 2005 when she came to Tower City for the harvest. She rode in the combine and counted the pheasants as they ran down the rows of wheat ahead of us. She counted swaths, she counted bushels, as well as how many cars on the trains as it passed by.

One afternoon, we turned to the west only to discover a huge thunder storm brewing. She said, "I am not afraid Let's finish." However...lightning and combines don't mix so we left the field Put the combine at the highest speed and parked it at home just before the rain let loose in the sky. To me it was a rather scary ride. Again.....adventure....

When Irene and Evelyn were on the water somewhere in Wales, they could talk to people along the bank....She said, "We exchanged pleasantries."

There were other "exchanges" as well... she traded her dress in the Holy Land with another person.

When Becky and Geoffrey were small she talked the bus driver along I-94 to let her off on the highway across from our farm. She assured him that someone would be home because we milked cows. So.... finally he agreed... she got two little children, a couple of suitcases, and whatever else across two lanes of the highway, across the ditch, over or under the highway fence, up to our house, and knocked on the window. Where there is a will, there is a way!

On another trip to ND the three of them brought a little white handled purse with a 'pet' ... security was not aware...another adventure.

Before the advent of Black Friday and crazy store hours one President's Day a store in Auntie Rena's area advertised a terrific sale on coats. So in the still dark of night Irene went to stand outside the store and wait for it to open. Mission accomplished – she had a coat for a good sale price and, of course, she had great fun!

She was enthusiastic about life....about the world around us....about each one of us!

There are a million, million stories to attest to the fun-loving, smiling person we loved ...Auntie Rena!

Phyllis Otterness, niece

War Time Help

This past June, 2016, I visited with Irene about the year that the president of the "AC" sent college students home to the farm to help with the harvest in the early 1940's. The young men were all in the service and families needed all the help they could get. Irene packed her bag and went home by bus from Fargo to Edgeley where her mother met her at the crossroads. Irene went right out to where her father was harvesting the crop and helped with the harvest tasks. Her father was so happy to see her.

She helped her dad with the measuring and recording of the acres for the agricultural office in LaMoure County. It was another area for her to use her math skills.

Durward Otterness, nephew-in-law

Smiles and More Smiles

When I think of Irene I immediately think of all her smiles. They were infectious!

She had a great curiosity and interest in others. When she visited us she asked about all aspects of the farm and our lives since her last visit. She loved the farm, NDSU, and Edgeley.

Her conversation was about others. She connected with everyone around her – young or not so young.

When she drove to see Grandma Meyer she brought a little white poodle. As young kids we thought that was so cool.

Laurie Otterness Schroeder, grand niece

Amazing

My great Aunt Irene was amazing! She traveled with Evelyn, her sister.

She lived for 97 years - that is a good amount of age. I am happy she did not die in pain.

She was a source of strength to many. She served in the Red Cross in WW II and founded the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Palm Beach County. This ability served her well after she completed college and did graduate work to become the first licensed woman contractor in the state of VA, serving as designer, general contractor and realtor for over 100 residences – no two alike. Her pursuit of new and exciting experiences led her to make homes in Falls Church.

She had an office on Capitol Hill.

Tiffany Otterness, grand, grand niece

Humor

Ah, yes, So many stories with Irene. Most of the stories would somehow I discovered revolve around strange situations on her travels that when she retold the event, had us all in stitches. So humor would be a good theme when remembering Irene.

When Tiff was 2 years old, Irene said, “She is such a sweetie, don’t scold her”.

I remember when I was younger; she and Evelyn would take these tremendous trips all over the world. I remember Israel and China to name a few. Somehow they would always be good for a “treat” from the plane, peanuts that they would save for us.

When each visited they would bring lefse. Irene always had very elaborate flowered dresses, with lots of rings and jewelry.

There was a time when she must have been going to Edgeley for a class reunion. She was stopped by a cop for whatever reason, and I can’t remember the whole circumstance but she didn’t have the 3 pieces of information he was looking for, plus she was in a rental car without a license plate. She was able to carry on to her destination, so we figured that the officer did not want to fill out paperwork for days or she went to her wallet and flashed some 20”s – wink, wink. But for her to tell us, it was half the fun.

When she was living in Florida, she lived down the street from Carter, who was a legit big league ball player for the Expos and Mets. She went to put these cards that I had given her in his mailbox for him to sign. With his exclusive deal with his charity he could not sign anything after a certain date. She sent a few, plus a wonderful picture of him with his arm around this elderly bald-headed man that we had no idea who he was but they were both smiling. Too funny!

Dana Otterness, grand nephew

Curious

Irene was so interested in everything. When she came to the farm she would take my hand and hold it while we visited. Then we would go to see the machinery and the crops. She again held my hand as she asked questions and listened to the answers about all aspects of this year's farming.

She came every year to go to the reunions in Edgeley

Duane Otterness, grand nephew

Freedom

Wear your gold shoes today!

Irene had a great life. She never needed Women's Lib, she just got out there and did what she wanted to do.

Erik Vick, grand nephew.

U. S. O.

When I was little I was told that Irene was working for the U.S.O. One day she was in charge of an evening dance. That night she walked from table to table to greet people. She had a great time but when the dance was over she said, "No one asked me to dance." She was very happy about that because she didn't know how to dance!

Crystal Houge Elmore, cousins

Aunt Rena

I heard about Auntie Rena some time before I met her – about how she was so very special and made you feel very special too – How she was funny and lots of fun - how she would play games with her nieces and nephews and tell them funny stories about her experiences.

When I finally met her I knew it was all true and more. She welcomed my parents and me as though we had known each other all of our lives.

She was always a gracious hostess and greeted us warmly and made us feel welcome.

Once during a visit to Tower City she said to me, “Let’s go for a drive – you drive.”

“So where to?”

“I want to see the area churches.” We drove about a hundred miles going to those neighboring towns. She studied the architecture of each church. She later used this knowledge in her design and building ventures.

As I got to know her she became my aunt as well as Pat’s.

Jerry Vick, Nephew-in-law

So the Good Die Young

She never said anything to make us stare.
But she lived her life with a certain air
Of knowing what the sun intends to do
With curly clouds, and why the blue
Of the ancient sky is always new.
She listened to people – and their words grew wise
Because of the wisdom within her eyes.
Lightly as leaves cling, the quick years clung
About her shoulders till her songs were sung.
Then she, at ninety-seven, being good, died young.

Authors: Harry and Bonaro Overstreet
(next door neighbors in Virginia)

Three Media articles from the Phyllis archives:

Willow Grove Methodist Church Reunion

Irene Olson Glass was the instigator of a Willow Grove Church Reunion although the church had been closed for years. The church was in existence from 1918 until 1968. Many individuals wrote remembrances about the church. In 1999 Irene wrote this about the church:

.....a church that packed such a powerful influence on our lives....one would be hard pressed to find a more devout group whose faith permeated our lives as children. Folks came from many places and plunged into a beehive of strenuous activity of fieldwork, livestock, and threshing. We remember something far greater than that. We remember that, even during threshing, with the fields being white, and enormous weather pressure of possible rain, hail,how the congregation would gather on Saturday afternoon at Orville Bartle's grove to play ball so as not to violate the Sabbath! What a heritage.

NDSU artifact featured on Martha Stewart Living:

Hand embroidered tea towels...

“This collection strives to preserve examples of the material culture of our region.” The towels were donated to the collection by Irene Olson Glass, a 1941 NDSU graduate, who collects textiles and clothing. Her gift, of over one hundred tea towels, feature a broad representation of embroidery and hand work. The towels were commonly used in homes from the late 1800’s to the 1960’s and were considered a sign of gracious living.

The featured hand embroidered tea towel is embellished with huck weaving, which is a form of embroidery developed in Sweden. The threads are stitched under two threads of fabric giving it a geometric quality.

North Dakota Agricultural Graduate's Experiences During World War II - Human Development and Education Newsletter

Irene (Olson) Glass looked down and found her future. Glass' mother had just covered the clean kitchen floor with newspapers, as was her custom, and Glass was standing at the low kitchen sink washing her hair, cocking her head this way and that to read the headlines beneath her. She had just graduated from the then – North Dakota Agricultural College, and was now helping with the spring planting back in Edgeley, N.D. She hadn't had much time for newspapers.

As she rinsed away the shampoo, an advertisement caught her eye. It said the Red Cross would foot the bill for graduate school if the respondent agreed to spend a year working for the organization Glass wrapped the towel around her wet head and walked straight to the phone.

Glass, a NDSU home economics, food, and nutrition graduate served in the Red Cross during World War II.

Within two weeks of reading the Red Cross advertisement on her parents' kitchen floor, 21 year old Glass, fresh from earning degrees in home economics and English, had a scholarship to graduate school. She began course work in social work at Washington University in St. Louis in 1943. Although it was a two year program, the Red Cross was ready to place social workers in the field after one year of study.

Glass was assigned to work in Colorado Springs, Colorado. "We worked in a big, gorgeous house that had been donated to the Red Cross," she said. Much of what she did involved facilitating communication between soldiers and the folks at home.

“If parents had not heard from their son for six months, they would come to us and we would do what we could to find him. That’s the sort of problems we dealt with.

American soldiers taken prisoner by the Japanese, both during and prior to WW II were allowed to send messages home and, when they did, they were allotted few words. “The most exhilarating message I recall receiving said, ‘When springtime in the Rockies.’ It was so limited in words, but came back to us as forceful promise that he’d be coming home,” Glass said. The recipient had only to fill in the lyrics of the popular folk tune: “When its springtime in the Rockies, I am coming back to you....”

After fulfilling her one year commitment to the Red Cross, and meeting her future husband, Glass was hired as a social worker by the Veteran Administration Hospital in Fargo and worked with soldiers returning from the war.

Building on her experiences during World War II, Glass achieved personal and professional success. Glass became a registered building contractor and the mother of two.





The Olson girls





High School Graduation







The Viking





Marvel, Evelyn, Irene and Otis

Miss Clara Glass
Chest - 34 inches
Waist - 24 inches
Length - 54 inches



Conner Glass/Beagan
Chest 34 1/2 inches
Waist 24 inches
Length 54 inches



Conner Glass/Beagan
Chest 34 1/2 inches
Waist 24 inches
Length 54 inches



Miss Clara Glass
Chest - 34 inches
Waist - 24 inches
Length - 54 inches

The Adventurer

When my grandson, Jakob, was just learning to read he sat between Irene and Isabel, his grandmother, and read them the book, 'Over in the Meadow' – one that he remembers as being "hard". There was a lot of interest in the story and praise for him at the end. However, later I realized that their hearing difficulties probably meant that neither one heard a word he said – but that was not communicated to him! Pictures probably saved the day! And if they were like me they could probably recite the story verbatim from having read it so many times to their own kids!

In later years she loved to play Solitaire. She played with intensity – nothing would distract her. She had to play all of her cards, even if it meant 'sliding' a card here or there to do so. Winning was also a top priority!

Irene, Connor, and Copper were here. It was one of the last days of their visit and the young gents wanted to go to the beach. I offered to do another activity, thinking she would not want to go to the beach – in a Florida winter. I was wrong – of course she wanted to go. It was a bit cool but she was a trooper all the way – even the hike into and out of the Avalanche several times that afternoon. This was her way with everything she faced. As they said at her celebration of life, her motto was "How hard can it be?"

She and Ed came to the yearly Viking boat races in Jensen Beach. She loved wearing the horns that supposedly Vikings wore. By the end of the afternoon she had had a conversation with almost everyone in attendance.

She was a very generous person but also very frugal by nature. As I think is true of all who went through the depression she did not throw things away if they had any use left in them. When they were moving to California we would go down to give them a hand. We had a Suburban at

the time and she sent us home with several loads of goods to be sold at our church rummage sale. On one of our last trips she looked in the window to see a bit of space at my feet. "Oh, wait, there is enough space to put more things." I, of course, was thinking, "I don't think so, hit it Jerry!"

I remember when she worked in Fargo, ND after the war. Ed Glass came to be where she was but he was not complimentary of ND winters! He was a very fun loving individual so it was a good match!

One fourth of July Irene received a call from one of their crew members in the development where she was building houses. Every year that development had a fourth of July parade through the neighborhood. Irene was finally convinced that she needed to go there to deal with an issue with the cherry picker. Once the workers had her safely in the basket of the cherry picker they quickly lifted it into the air. They wanted her to be in the parade so they had to trick her into it!

We visited them in Falls Church one Fall. Lisa and Erik were primary school age. Even though Irene had worked all day we had to go out on the driveway after dinner and play some 'kid' games!

Often when Irene and Ed visited us my mother-in-law and father-in-law were included in the "party". They were always so welcomed and included on a family level. They loved that and them!

Cooper shares the story of chauffeuring Irene on an errand. Upon returning he made sure when pulling into the garage that he gave Irene plenty of space to get out. In so doing he took the side mirror off of the driver's side. He was thinking, "Oh no, now I've done it." He looked over at Irene, who with a twinkle in her eye and a smile on her lips said, "My sides okay."

Our dear Tiffany 'researched' Irene's favorite color and then found a dress that was turquoise AND flowered! What

a find! So this put us in the know of Irene's favorite color and thus the turquoise paper for the remembrances!

This collection of memories is dedicated to Irene's memory for all the joy, fun, love, and care she gave to everyone she met!

Pat Vick, niece

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