



Gwen Christiansen Phillips

December 16, 1930 - September 8, 2015

Gwen Lee Christiansen Phillips (1930-2015)

CEDAR FALLS- Gwen Lee Christiansen Phillips, 84, of Cedar Falls, formerly of Oskaloosa, died Tuesday, September 08, 2015, at Sartori Memorial Hospital.

She was born December 16, 1930 in Oskaloosa, Iowa, daughter of George and Edna (Morgan) Christiansen. She married 1st Lt. Keith E. Phillips (USMC), on June 1, 1956 at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Collington, MD. He died August 31, 1960.

She graduated from Oskaloosa High School in 1949 and earned her BA degree in 1953 from Iowa State Teachers College (UNI) and her MA from State College of Iowa (UNI) in 1964. She taught in Cedar Rapids, Glen Burnie, MD, and Dumfries, VA, prior to teaching 1st grade at Cedar Heights Elementary School in Cedar Falls for 28 years, retiring in 1992.

Survived by: a daughter, Anne Phillips of Waterloo; a son, Charles (LeAnn) Phillips of Urbandale; six grandchildren: Michael Terpstra, Stephanie Phillips, Abbey (Matt) Bries, Kate, Sarah and Emma Sinnott; one great grandchild, Jacob Bries; a brother, Duane Christiansen of St. Petersburg, FL; and several nieces and nephews.

Preceded in death by: a brother, Donald Christiansen.

Private family inurnment will occur in Forest Cemetery in Oskaloosa. A Celebration of Life will be held later in December: 4 to 7 p.m. Monday, DECEMBER 28th at Richardson Funeral Service, where there will be a 6 p.m. service.

Memorials may be directed to the Cedar Falls Public Library.

Cemetery Details

Forest Cemetery

Oskaloosa, IA

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

DEC 28. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Richardson Funeral Service
615 Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 266-3525
richardsonfuneralservice@gmail.com
<http://richardson.funeralplan2.com>

Memorial Service

DEC 28. 6:00 PM (CT)

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Tribute Wall

AB

“ I thought I would surely get to the visitation tonight, but the weather has stopped me. Gwen taught both of our children as well as one grandchild. I had just talked to her a week or so before she left us. She said she was thinking of moving, and she did, but not where we thought she was going. She and I shared a birth date which we found out at an AAUW Cedar Falls dinner meeting. I know you will miss her as we will. Ardelle Brown

Ardelle Brown - December 28, 2015 at 05:37 PM

SB

“ What a special lady! I taught with Gwen in the Annex at Cedar Heights for many years. She was always so warm and helpful as I needed information when I began in a new school. I am so sorry I am unable to make the service.

Suellyn Brooks - December 28, 2015 at 04:44 PM

ML

“ I just learned of your mother's passing,my heart is with you. My mother worked at Cedar Heights as a teachers aide for 16 years, (Virginia Nicholas) .I never had Gwen as my teacher but got to know her through her pets. Most recently would have been Maddie ,her cat she got as a rescue at Companion Animal Clinic where I worked for 30 years. Always thought very highly of her,my mom passed about a year and half ago, I still miss her. But as with my mom ,your mom I'm sure left you with lots of happy memories. Once again I'm sorry for your loss,move on with happy memories and the kind of life your mom had . She had a lot of positive impact on a lot people always remember that.

Sincerely ,

Mary Love

Mary Love - December 25, 2015 at 04:17 PM

DS

“ So sorry to hear about your mother. We always enjoyed working on projects with your mother; she was a fun lady! Please accept my sincerest condolences. Denny Staebell at Denny Staebell Home Improvement.

Denny Staebell - December 22, 2015 at 08:39 AM

AP

Thank you for your kind comments. She always spoke very highly of you. Thanks again for helping my mom.
Anne

Anne Phillips - December 22, 2015 at 08:56 PM

KM

“ I so loved your Mother! She was such an amazing Lady and an incredible teacher. I had the privilege of teaching with your Mother in my very early years of teaching at Cedar Heights. She was so thoughtful, kind and very helpful to me any time I had a question. The world has truly lost an amazing and beautiful Lady. God Bless you all!

Kathy Higgins Mullane (Cedar Heights 1970- 1975)

kathy higgins mullane - October 15, 2015 at 08:53 PM

AP

A very belated thank you for your lovely words. It helps a lot to hear these memories.

Anne Phillips - December 22, 2015 at 08:57 PM

LH

“ Our thoughts and prayers go out to you, Anne, and to your family as you grieve the loss of your mother. Please know that we will be thinking of you both now and in the days ahead.

Linda & Dan Holm

Linda Holm - September 16, 2015 at 11:28 AM

AP

Thank you so much. Your note means a lot to me.

Anne Phillips - September 16, 2015 at 07:17 PM

CM

“ To Chuck, Anne, Duane and your families

My condolences to all of you. I have fond memories of Gwen and Keith. Both were good friends and highschool classmates of mine in Oskaloosa. Gwen was always a classy,intelligent and very pretty lady. I recall another friend and I encouraging Keith to date her. I will miss our yearly exchange of Christmas cards with news of our respective families. Sadly, Charles [Chuck] Moore, St.Louis, MO .

Charles Moore - September 16, 2015 at 08:58 AM

AP

Thank you so much for taking the time to write! We love your memories and appreciate you thinking of us.

Anne Phillips - September 16, 2015 at 07:18 PM

DD

Anne and girls, From Denver St, My most sincere sympayou and daughters, it's a sad time, y maternal grandmother died Christmas AM 1943 I'll always remember that day. Sincerely. David DeLancey 809 Denver St., Waterloo

David DeLancey - December 21, 2015 at 07:46 PM

AP

*Thank you so much, David! Miss you all and Denver Street.
Anne*

Anne Phillips - December 22, 2015 at 08:58 PM

JF

“ *To the Family of Gwen Phillips*
From: John H. Focht

I first met Mrs. Phillips when I became the principal of Cedar heights School in Cedar Falls, in 1971. I enjoyed working with her until I left the school in 1984.

She taught first grade children there for many years. She was a member of a very strong and talented teacher corp at that level. The students there were given a solid start because of that teaching. Mrs. Phillips was an outstanding teacher. Not only was she skilled in teaching techniques but she also owned a pleasant and accepting personality that helped her relate positively to her students. The best way that I can explain it is that she used a balance of formality in her approach mixed with an ability to see the 'whole child' and worked diligently to meet needs and roadblocks that sometimes deterred learning.

She held great respect from her fellow teachers, her students and parents. She was a mainstay at Cedar Heights for many years. I never heard her say anything negative about any child or adult. As I alluded that she had a formal air about her but but it was tempered with a pleasing sense of humor. Her appearance was always immaculate. Yes, she was a very pretty lady.

She helped make students feel good about themselves. I loved working with her through those 14 years. She was a wonderful teacher for Cedar Heights students.

On a personal note it was always a pleasure to talk to her about her family. She was so proud of Ann and Chuck... and loved telling about the grandchildren. So proud of them also.

A Grand lady... a gentle lady. . A wonderful lady. I am honored to have known and worked with her at Cedar Heights School.

John/judy Focht - September 14, 2015 at 03:42 PM

AP

Thank so you much for sharing these memories. You described her perfectly. Thanks again for taking the time to write this. We truly appreciate it.

Anne

Anne Phillips - September 14, 2015 at 09:18 PM

PG

“ No heart breaks alone for God is always near. When a prayer is whispered God is always there to hear. When sorrow's overwhelming, He comforts tenderly. A single tear never falls that he does not hear.(Psalms 65:2) Sorry for your loss.

Peggy Gienau - September 13, 2015 at 12:45 PM

AP

Thank you so much for the support. It means a lot to Chuck and I.

Anne Phillips - September 14, 2015 at 09:18 PM

SB

“ My memories of Gwen are so sweet. She was always so helpful when I came to Cedar Heights Elementary where she taught first grade and I taught second grade. She was quiet but when she spoke it was always something to listen to. Her kindness with her students and all of us teaching in the annex added to the warmth of the setting. When she retired we did a skit about her that made her smile. She always has a place in my heart. Suellyn Brooks

Suellyn Brooks - September 11, 2015 at 09:28 AM

AP

Thank you for sharing this with us. We appreciate it very much.

Anne Phillips - September 12, 2015 at 10:35 AM

DS

Dear Anne, (and other relatives) On behalf of the Lockard family, we offer our sympathies and prayers. [A note of explanation-- Your father's mother was a Lockard of the New Sharon--Oskaloosa area. I was Mary Louise Lockard's (a cousin to your father) husband. Anyway, we are thinking of you and yours.

Dale Schwechel - September 13, 2015 at 09:05 PM

AP

What a great connection! Thank you so much for sharing this. It means a great deal to us that you sent this message.

Anne Phillips - September 16, 2015 at 07:20 PM