



Mary Dreier

April 15, 1920 - September 8, 2013

Mary Ellen Dreier (1920 – 2013)

Mary Ellen was born on a farm near Sigourney, Iowa on April 15, 1920 to Ritta and Harry Shanafelt. She attended a one-room school until she moved into town to attend Sigourney High School. Her parents were strong believers in education and in 1942 she graduated from Iowa State College with a degree in Home Economics.

After teaching briefly she married Private William Dreier in the Sigourney First Methodist Church on April 13, 1943. She joined her husband moving from base to base before he was shipped over seas. Soon after, she gave birth to a baby girl named Marion Carol, who died at childbirth. During her husband's absence, she joined her sister Marge (Bitter) in St. Paul, MN and began a long career as a nursery school teacher.

In 1949 Mary Ellen and Dr. Bill Dreier moved to Cedar Falls, Iowa where Bill began his long tenure in the Education Dept. at Iowa State Teachers College (now UNI). In 1952, they moved their young family from temporary housing units to a house on the corner of 26th and College St. There they would raise their five children (Dan, Ted, Ruth, James and Ritta), host their 10 grandchildren and live for 48 years.

Mary Ellen and Bill became active in the Cedar Falls First Baptist Church and in 1960 joined a group to establish the new Valley View Baptist Church on Orchard St. They were leaders and active supporters of this church for 50 years. Later they became involved in Inter-faith Charismatic Fellowship group and in July of every summer could always be found at the Green Lake Conference Center for a spiritual retreat.

In 1963, Mary Ellen's widowed mother Ritta Shanafelt joined the family at 2604 College St. and Mary Ellen renewed her educational path by walking across the street to the (now) State College of Iowa. She received her master's degree in Special Education and was soon employed as a Special Ed. teacher and stayed in the Cedar Falls school system and Area Education Agency until her retirement in 1984.

During her retirement years Mary Ellen stayed active in a variety of professional and faith-based women's groups, was a volunteer tutor for adult students and gave aid to numerous people in need. She and Bill enjoyed being active with their grandchildren near and far. Mary Ellen was present at, or shortly after, the births of many of her grandchildren, giving her full love, attention and support.

In 2000 Mary Ellen and Bill moved into the Windgrace Retirement Center. Shortly before Bill passed away in 2006, they moved to Windhaven Assisted Living, where Mary Ellen continued to lead an active and full life. She enjoyed the company of her friends there and visits by her family, including her 2 great grand children. When Valley View closed its doors in 2010, she attended Waterloo First Baptist Church where she soon became a beloved elder of the church.

Mary Ellen Dreier died peacefully in her Windhaven home with friends and family close by on September 8th, 2013.

Tribute Wall

TB

“ I have so many memories of Mary Ellen through my entire life. Mary Ellen and Bill were who I have always wished I could be. In my book they were the true meaning of what a Christian is. Mary Ellen was my Sunday school teacher my entire life except for the few years we lived in Wyoming. She also taught my children and all my nieces and nephews. The world has lost a true angel on earth. When I heard the news the morning I broke down and cried for myself and all the people who will never have the pleasure of having their lives touched by such a wonderful woman. One of my favorite memories was at Bible school when we were making clay projects and Chip (my brother) smashed my pretty flower creation and Mary Ellen soothed me and told me she would get me more clay to make another. There were so many times in the 60's that I would go home with Mary Ellen because Bill and Grandma Mernal were on the board and Mary Ellen would let me go home with her instead of sitting and waiting for the meeting to be over. I loved this woman and her husband Dr. William Dreier who were there during every tragedy of my life to lift me up and remind me that it was Gods will and that we would understand why when we were called home. Love and will miss you dearly Mary Ellen.

Tammy Schafer Bordeaux - October 15, 2013 at 03:34 PM

BB

“ My condolences to Mary Ellen Dreier family. Mary Ellen was my special education teacher at Valley Park Elementary school and family friend. She knew my mother Devon Ward and my grandfather Francis E. Smith. She was wonderful teacher to me and I will miss her. She did help me out when my grandmother Penney passed away and when my mother was in hospital. Also she did come to my wedding in 2001.

Barbara Bushby(Ward) - October 15, 2013 at 03:34 PM

SL

“ Mary Ellen has been a dear friend and support to our family for many years. She prayed for us and loved us through thick and thin. Now she dances with the angels, but her light will continue to shine here on earth through her family and friends. Her peace and love and joy were contagious. We will miss her so much. Our love and sympathy go to Dan, Ted, Jim, Ritta, Ruth and all of her beloved family.

Sharon Longnecker - October 15, 2013 at 03:34 PM

RK

“ Mary Ellen & Bill together were tremendous testimonies of their love for the Lord and other people. They gave so much of themselves to the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit Renewal Ministries, especially to the annual week of special meetings at Green Lake, Wisconsin. Our loss of Mary Ellen is certainly Heaven's gain and we are grateful that she and Bill are once more together in that wonderful place!

May the Lord bless you, as family members and friends, as you acclimate yourselves to the temporary separation of this beloved lady.

*Blessings,
Rev Earl & Lois Jean Kinney*

Rev Earl & Lois Jean Kinney - October 15, 2013 at 03:34 PM

CS

“ Mary Ellen and the entire Dreier family were all-time favorite baby sitters for us Sewell kids. She inspired us then, and despite limited contact, continued to inspire for more than 50 years.
With love and sympathy, Craig Sewell.

Craig Sewell - October 15, 2013 at 03:34 PM

SR

“ I am Stan's daughter -- don't know if any of you remember me. So sorry to hear about your mother. So wish I could have come to the funeral -- one of the last of the Dreier clan.

Sonja Dreier Rekers - October 15, 2013 at 03:34 PM

JF

“ Dear Dreier Cousins,

We are saddened by the lost of Aunt MaryEllen. She was an amazing lady. We were always impressed with how well she kept up on the happenings of our family and how she prayed for us. We enjoyed our yearly chats during Ragbrai. Aunt MaryEllen inspired us with her love of life and focus on staying active.

When I visited her in July she told me that she was feeling like Bill was with her. "I know in my mind he isn't but it feels so real." I wonder if Uncle Bill was patiently waiting for her to join him and letting her know that he would greet her.

We are sorry that we cannot attend the service. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Jean, Ralph, Liz and Frank Fairchild (Henning)

Jean and Ralph Fairchild - March 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM