



Dorothy Schmidt Franz

April 27, 1921 - January 9, 2020

Dorothy Schmidt Franz (age 98) passed peacefully in Moses Lake on January 9, 2020. She was born April 27, 1921 to Peter Jacob (PJ) Schmidt and Katherine Unruh Schmidt of Goessel, Kansas and was baptized at the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church. Dorothy graduated from Goessel High School, obtained a teaching certificate from Bethel College and taught for two years in a one-room schoolhouse near Goessel. While attending college at Bethel, Dorothy met the love of her life, Henry Julius Franz; they were soon married and moved to the family farm near Lind, Washington. They celebrated 50 years of marriage before Henry's passing in 1995.

Dorothy was a very active member of the Menno Mennonite Church where she taught Sunday School for more than 40 years, produced many children's Christmas Eve programs, taught Bible School and loved singing soprano in the church choir. She also was a member of the service organization, Menno Women in Mission. From the inception, she participated in the Mennonite Country Auction, working in various booths and baking pies. In the early 1960's, she and Henry served on a committee to purchase land for a church campground. Once the land was selected and purchased, they didn't wait for buildings to be erected—Dorothy and several others cooked on the back of a truck for the very first campers at Camp CAMREC near Leavenworth. Her lifelong desire to serve with Mennonite Disaster Service was realized in 2006 when she traveled to Louisiana to assist with cleanup after Hurricane Katrina.

Dorothy also was instrumental in organizing the Columbia Basin Community Concert Association and sat on the board for over thirty years. Besides her love for the church and music, she also enjoyed painting, wheat weaving, pottery and traveling.

Embracing and excelling at the often under-appreciated and undervalued job of Farm Wife, Dorothy sent generations of harvest crews to meet the day with a promise of three home-cooked meals and a home-like atmosphere, complete with freshly laundered and mended clothing. Dorothy loved to entertain dinner and overnight guests, particularly friends and family from Kansas. She will be remembered as an excellent cook—her apple pie and cinnamon rolls were legendary. No one ever left her table hungry. She also was an excellent seamstress—making, mending and altering clothing, including wedding, prom and pageant dresses. Dorothy was always willing to lend a listening ear to anyone in need, never being judgmental, but truly caring.

Always the country girl, Dorothy moved from the farm to the city in 2012 to an apartment at Monroe House in Moses Lake, Washington. She made many new friends at Monroe House, and she enjoyed the food, the excellent care and the many activities the staff planned for the residents, especially the Tuesday bus drives. A women's Bible Study group met each week in her apartment and she was able to be a part of this until the week before her passing. She treated the living room as her own and was able to entertain friends and family there. She appreciated all of her visitors, especially the regular visits from her great-grandchildren. She was fortunate to spend Christmas Day 2019 with her family in Post Falls. She loved the drive to Idaho and all of the day's activities.

Dorothy was preceded in death by her parents Peter Jacob (PJ) and Katherine Unruh Schmidt; one sister, Elsie Flaming; two brothers, Harvey K.

Schmidt and Willard Schmidt; husband Henry J. Franz, and great-grandson John Avery Atkinson. Surviving are sisters-in-law Lucille Franz Harms of Leavenworth, Washington, Lois Franz Bartel of North Newton, Kansas, Louise Schmidt of Moundridge, Kansas, brother Randolph (Meribeth) Schmidt of Goessel, Kansas and brother-in-law Craig (Cheryl) Dorsing, Moses Lake. Two daughters and one son survive: Katherine (Dennis) Swinger of rural Lind, Ruth (Greg) Gfeller of Post Falls, Idaho and John (Linda) Franz of West Des Moines, Iowa. Also surviving are granddaughters, Lori (John Atkinson) Franz of San Francisco, California, Suzanne Swinger Salita of Redmond, Washington and Alicia (Stephen) Gibbs of Post Falls, Idaho and grandsons, Dennis Swinger, Jr. of rural Lind, Trevor (Nicole) Gfeller of Hayden, Idaho and Scott Franz of Missoula, Montana. Surviving are seven great-grandchildren: Brandon and Zane Swinger, Emily Buriak, Baylor and Hudson Gibbs, and Hazel and Zoe Franz. Dorothy also leaves behind a host of beloved nieces and nephews on both the Franz and the Schmidt sides of her family.

Memorials may be made to Camp CAMREC or MCC (Mennonite Central Committee for world hunger and relief) in care of Menno Mennonite Church 1378 N. Damon Road Ritzville, WA 99169.

Cemetery Details

Menno Mennonite Cemetery

Ritzville, WA

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 17. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Kayser's Chapel of Memories
831 S. Pioneer Way
Moses Lake, WA

Visitation

JAN 18. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (PT)

Menno Mennonite Church
1378 N Damon Rd
Ritzville, WA

Service

JAN 18. 11:00 AM (PT)

Menno Mennonite Church
1378 N Damon Rd
Ritzville, WA

Graveside Service

JAN 20 (PT)

Menno Mennonite Cemetery
Ritzville, WA

Tribute Wall



“ *Kayser's Chapel of Memories created a Tribute Video in memory of Dorothy Schmidt Franz*



Kayser's Chapel of Memories - January 15, 2020 at 05:08 PM

JF

“ *Dorothy was the most remarkable, loving and beautiful person I have ever known. What a blessing to have known her. -Julie Freeman*

Julie Freeman - January 23, 2020 at 12:16 PM

MV

“ *I'm so sorry for your loss... I remember playing with Ruthie at Dorothy's house when I was a kid. Dorothy was always smiling and the best hostess.*

Mike Voth

Mike Voth - January 17, 2020 at 02:41 PM

DA

“ *What a wonderful woman! I did not know her personally, but the obituary was a testimony to a life well lived in the service of God. I know this beautiful, caring lady is smiling with joy in our Father's kingdom . . . shining with God's glory like the stars.*



How fortunate to have spent so many precious years on the 'farm' and active in a rural community. We city dwellers can only imagine

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God bless you, Mrs. Franz.

Daniel - January 16, 2020 at 03:09 PM

MP

“ *I remember Dorothy well. We served together on the Community Concert Board many years ago. In later years I would visit with Dorothy when she attended family gatherings at our neighbors (Dorsing's) home. I also was always glad to see her at Community Concerts through the years. I remember her as a warm, friendly lady with an upbeat attitude.*

Mary Perry - January 15, 2020 at 12:34 AM

JU

Wonderful memories even though she left Goessel many years ago she would visit here and always remembered people with her lovely smile.

Judy Unruh - January 15, 2020 at 03:23 PM

BT

Our family remembers Dorothy at her family's cabin on Deer Lake. She was always so kind and her smile was contagious. She will be missed.

Barb and Cornel Tenneson - January 16, 2020 at 04:25 PM

NT

Katherine, Dennis and family, Larry and I send our deep condolences on the passing of this wonderful woman.

Nancy Tracy - January 17, 2020 at 09:25 PM

RS

What a wonderful lady and friend of my mother, Edna Watkins. They had many great visits and sharing of farming life at Monroe House these past years. God has blessed her greatly. Roylene & Dick Scoggin

Roylene Scoggin - January 18, 2020 at 11:32 AM