

**M**ildred Marie Hotchkiss, and her twin sister Myrt, were born on July 19, 1931, in Erwin, South Dakota, to Julius Gustav and Alvina Marie (Lilleskov) Noem. She grew up in the Erwin area and graduated from Bryant High School in 1949. While working in Sioux Falls, she met the love of her life, Herman Edward Hotchkiss at the Arkota Ballroom in Sioux Falls. They were married on September 23, 1955 in Bryant, and settled on the Hotchkiss family farm in the Humboldt area where she helped Herman on the farm and raised her family. Herman passed away on May 10, 2016.

Mildred was an active member of the Colton United Methodist Church. She loved to garden and tend to her flowers. She also enjoyed quilting, reading, doing puzzles and of course, square dancing with Herman. Millie and Herman also loved to travel. They traveled all across the country, including Hawaii, Alaska, and California for the Rose Bowl Parade.

Mildred passed away on Friday, January 9, 2026, at the Good Samaritan Village in Sioux Falls.

Blessed to share her life are her children: Paul (Myrna) Hotchkiss, Janet (Kraig) Swier, Dennis (Julie) Hotchkiss, David (Karri) Hotchkiss; her grandchildren, Jenae (Neil) Klein, Justin (Holly) Hotchkiss, Tyler (Sarah) Hotchkiss, Lindsey (Josh) Kuipers, Rebecca (Zeb) Lytle, Jake Hotchkiss, Josh Hotchkiss, and Jen Hotchkiss; step grandchildren, Beth (John) Helgerson and Angie Blackford; 14 great grandchildren; four step great grandchildren; and one step great great granddaughter; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Herman; step grandson, Lance Blackford; and siblings, Ralph Noem, Norwood Noem, Curt Noem, Myrt Collins, Joyce Litz, and Norma Lutz.

# *In Memory Of* **Mildred Hotchkiss**

July 19, 1931 † January 9, 2026

## **Funeral Service**

1:00 PM

Saturday, January 17, 2026

United Methodist Church

Colton, South Dakota

## **Officiating**

Rev. Susan Jennys, PhD

## **Pianist**

Cindy Oberg

## **Congregational Hymns**

“It is Well With My Soul”

“Nearer My God to Thee”

“Because He Lives”

## **Pallbearers**

Jenae Klein  
Tyler Hotchkiss  
Rebecca Lytle  
Josh Hotchkiss

Justin Hotchkiss  
Lindsey Kuipers  
Jake Hotchkiss  
Jen Hotchkiss

## **Interment**

Colton Cemetery  
Colton, South Dakota

*Could I Have This Dance*  
*Anne Murray*

I'll always remember the song they were playing  
The first time we danced and I knew  
As we swayed to the music and held to each other  
I fell in love with you

Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?  
Could you be my partner every night?  
When we're together, it feels so right  
Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?

I'll always remember that magic moment  
When I held you close to me  
As we move together, I knew forever  
You're all I'll ever need

Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?  
Could you be my partner every night?  
When we're together, it feels so right  
Could I have this dance for the rest of my life?



*A Life Remembered*



**Mildred M. Hotchkiss**  
July 19, 1931 - January 9, 2026

**W**hen I think of my grandma, I think of joy, warmth, and a true zest for life. Some of my earliest memories are of her and grandpa square dancing with friends and many of my family — and me learning the chicken dance! She made the very best thin, crispy sugar cookies, and learning to make her homemade caramels with her remains one of my favorite memories! There are peaches, plums and cherries on the kitchen table and somehow the peas from her garden always tasted better when you snuck them straight off the vine!

The Fourth of July at grandma and grandpa's is where my love of fireworks began, and over the years it even became tradition to have a full-on family water fight! Grandma joined right in — water gun and all — and she kept participating up until just a few years ago. The pool at their farm when we were young, cannonballs, hours of splashing around! I also enjoyed riding the three-wheeler up and down their long driveway — those simple moments of fun and freedom that now mean so much more.

Many weekends were spent at Lake Vermillion when we were young. I remember Grandma encouraging uncle Paul to make my brother "fly" on the tube behind the boat! In the basement was a pool table where I think all of us learned to play from a young age — starting with just hitting balls and eventually being able to hold a pool stick and make actual shots. They also had a pinball game that we would bring down from the storage room upstairs on visits and holidays, as an adult, every time I play pinball on a trip or during a fun night out, I smile thinking of those early memories.

Easter brought another kind of tradition — and adventure! Grandma and Uncle Paul would hide everyone's baskets all over the farm, turning the holiday into a full-scale hunt! I remember my brothers having baskets in the barn rafters! We searched and searched, sometimes with a little frustration, but always with plenty of laughter from all of us kids! I was lucky enough to go on one special adventure with grandma and grandpa to a family reunion in Wisconsin. I remember standing in the clearest lake I had ever seen, with grandma at my side. We ate at an adorable country café, visited a circus museum, and even explored a junkyard art exhibit — proof that with them, every trip became a story worth telling!

She and my grandpa loved to travel, and now the ornaments from Alaska, Hawaii, Florida and their many adventures carry even more meaning — each one a reminder of the life they built together. Their love of exploring the country has become a reminder to me to live every day to the fullest — to take the trip, make the plans, and never stop discovering what this world has to offer!

I will always remember her energy, her laughter, and the way she made everyday moments feel special. And while we miss her deeply here, I find comfort in believing that grandpa was there to greet her — and that somewhere, they are square dancing again, enjoying being together once more!

These are just a few of the memories that I will carry with me forever, of the beautiful soul we were all so lucky to know and love.

It's not goodbye, it's see you later.  
Love, Jenae



*“Millie”*

**A life of quiet strength and faithful love,**

**Now walking the gardens of heaven above.**

**The fruits of her labor reached far beyond what she grew,**

**Her faith was planted in the hearts of all that she knew.**

**She was short and sweet, with a laughter we loved,**

**And always gave the warmest, most comforting hugs.**

**She baked the best caramels and brought lunch to the fields,**

**She milked cows at dawn, and joy was her yield.**

**She loved dancing and quilting, and gardens well-tended,**

**Her love was the thread for every heart**

**and pair of jeans she mended.**

**She loved her big family and all her garden ‘Noems’,**

**And smiled when she heard Grandpa and Jesus say,**

**“Welcome Home.”**

**Tyler & Sarah Hotchkiss**