

What Mom Took

Most often when we think of Mom,
We think of what she's given:
The softness of a loving touch,
A gentle guide for living;
A nightly tip-toe in a room,
An understanding look;
But sometimes when I think of Mom
I think of what she took.
She took a child and taught it how
To live this life with pride
She took those kindergarten tears,
And kept them all inside.
She took the hand that longed to hold
Her child and not let go
Used them to push her child along
The way, to thrive and grow.
Took time to do some other things
Like sew, and clean and cook,
And never thought to ask for thanks
For all the things she took.
Thank, Mom.

Judith Bond

Irene Elizabeth Jane Bunnell

1928 - 2022



Love

Family

Memories

Irene Elizabeth Jane Harmon Bunnell was born March 4, 1928 in Chamberlain, South Dakota to Ruth Irene Ransford Harmon and Charles Franklin Harmon. She was the oldest of 11 children. Irene lived her entire life in the Chamberlain/Oacoma area.

A previous article written by Amy Blum for the *Homespun Tagline* describes Irene's humble life: Today, premature or especially tiny babies receive top-notch care in highly specialized facilities. In 1928, 3-pound 4-ounce Irene Harmon of Oacoma was wrapped in cotton for two weeks and sent home in a shoebox and warm water bottles to keep her warm. Some might say she was born tough. "I'm not sure why, but I had a heck of a time getting a birth certificate. There was no proof I existed except for the fact I was breathing." Born tough, Irene carried the weight of being the oldest child and became the family's sole provider when her father was injured for a brief time. She worked at the original Rainbow Café in Chamberlain and walked to work from American Island where the family lived. Irene thought little of the trials she experienced and holds tight to the memories. Like the time an oncoming train scared the daylights out of the horse-pulling cart in which her and siblings rode home from school. The self-taught seamstress spent her late teen years on American Island with her family. She would clean the Island's tourist cabins. "Oh that island was quite the place, it was so pretty with a race track and swimming pool." The article concluded with Irene saying, "I started out here in Chamberlain/Oacoma and I will end here too. This is just a real good place to be. The people are very nice, and I hold a lot of memories."

Irene married Derald Gene Bunnell on September 8, 1947 and to that union seven children were born. Irene passed away Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at Sanford Care Center, Chamberlain, South Dakota, at the age of 94. Gratefully sharing her life are her children Linda (Bill) Stallman, Derald Bunnell, Glenda Braun, Doug (Cindy) Bunnell, Della Meagher, Valerie Giedd Suko, all from the Chamberlain/Oacoma area and Gayle (Jim) Neisen of Rapid City; brothers James Harmon of Oacoma and Donald (Liz) Harmon of Spearfish. Also twenty grandchildren, 40 great grandchildren, and 1 great great grandchild share her loving legacy.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Gene Bunnell, her sisters Alice Hutmacher and June Schooler McGuire, and brothers Gene Harmon, Kenny Harmon, Glen Harmon, Charles Harmon, Ralph Harmon, and Wayne Harmon. Son in laws preceding her in death were Robert "Bob" Braun and Donnie Meagher.

Irene was a kind, gentle spiritual soul who touched many lives in her earthly journey. She will be deeply missed by all who loved her, especially her children. The beautiful memories will live in the hearts of many.

In Loving Memory of
Irene Elizabeth Jane Bunnell

March 4, 1928 ~ June 15, 2022

Funeral Service

Oacoma Community Center
Oacoma, SD
Monday, June 20, 2022
10:30 a.m.

Officiating

Pastor Leigh Warmbrand

Music

Sandra Harmon
In the Garden
Amazing Grace
Go Rest High On That Mountain

Casketbearers

Shane Andresen	Mitch Bunnell
Cody Andresen	Dillon Giedd
Billy Bob Stallman	Austin Giedd
Bobby Braun	Levi Giedd
Beau Braun	Blake Meagher

Honorary Bearers

Linda Stallman	Derald Bunnell	
Glenda Braun	Doug Bunnell	
Della Meagher	Valerie Suko	Gayle Neisen

Interment

Graceland Cemetery
Oacoma, SD

Everyone is invited for lunch and refreshments back at the community center immediately following the committal services.

Arrangements By: Hickey Funeral Home, Chamberlain, SD