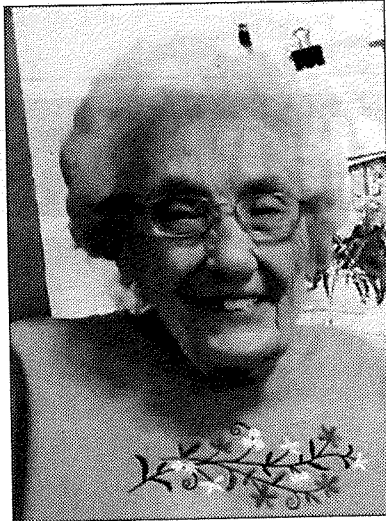


GHR, Mon.
8/19/24

Ruth Kathryn Lamb



Ruth Kathryn Lamb, 94, of Grinnell died August 13, 2024, at Mary Greeley Medical Center in Ames, Iowa.

Her funeral service at St. John's Lutheran Church on East Street is scheduled at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, August 20, 2024; with burial afterward at Hazelwood in Grinnell; then lunch at St. John's. Pastor Daniel Rinehart will officiate. Pallbearers will be Larry Walz, Timothy Walz, Steve Chyma, Delmar Thompson, Rod Thompson and Roger Hutchinson. Honorary bearers are Jacob A. Lamb, Darwin Kinne, and Shad Sisson.

Family visitation will be from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday, August 19, at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell. Memorial contributions if desired should be payable to Dale A. Lamb with memo noting for Ruth K. Lamb memorial purposes, which are yet to be determined. Memories and condolences may be shared with Ruth's family online at www.smithfh.com.

Ruth Kathryn (Parker) Lamb was born December 11, 1929, in a farm house south of Ewart between Monte and Grinnell. The fourth child of Clifford B. Parker and Julia Catherine (Rix) Parker, she was raised on various farms in Poweshiek County and baptized April 5, 1942. From early age she loved farm animals, perhaps not the regularly attacking geese; a pet pig followed everywhere she went; and later she delighted in riding the family work horse around the farm.

Through eighth grade she attended school in a one-room school house where for a time her oldest sister Eleanor taught her. In 1947 she graduated Grinnell High School in downtown Grinnell on Fourth Avenue north of the east half of Central Park. During high school, well before the current three-on-three basketball league was contemplated, she played a little different three-on-three game. In high school, during the week, she and other young ladies boarded in the large Palmer house that previously stood on the southeast corner of Fifth and Park. While a student, she was a ticket taker at the three-story Opera House that then stood on the southwest corner of Fifth and Main. The wooden ticket takers' cash box used there, now displayed at the Strand Theatre contains her and others' names.

June 21, 1952, in the small Lutheran church north of Eighth Ave. on Elm in Grinnell she wed Merle Allen Lamb, a former Army Sergeant and dashing Tyrone Power doppelganger, who, in Ruth's teenage years had taken her dancing at the college women's gymnasium, and later flown her about in a small Piper Cub aero plane. Dancing and fun had to contend with her receptionist/secretarial work at the Shuey Insurance Agency, and then the local social service office for 10 years, which work slowly petered out as children (the 3 Ds), Dale, Dennis, and Diane, arrived and took over the house. However, years later, once one became a lawyer at her behest, and needed affordable staffing, her secretarial/receptionist work resumed, but with the latest advanced thermal paper copying process. In 1988, her successor made \$3 an hour.

With 5 cent allowances, later 25 due to inflation, but few chores, she raised two sports-minded lawnmowing Eagle Scout paperboys and a Special Olympics' swimmer, all of whom, under her watchful eye, were Sunday school attendance achievers and participated in either band or choir. Her children were her all-consuming passion and joy for whom she went all out. This carried over to grandson wrangling and attending his Scouting, soccer and baseball activities; and WOW, what a cook, a jack of all tatters who taught her daughter-in-law and nieces ancient trade secrets. She was a buttered cracker and popcorn lover, who at Christmas made delectable oyster soup using lots of butter (a real lot); a confectioner, using more butter; and an accomplished pumpkin pie, cheese grilled, tapioca pudding, roast, fried chicken, and liver cooked to the crisp, chef.

She was a Maytag/Electrolux-J. C. Penny-Youngers shopping Susie homemaker (domestic engineer) extraordinaire, a seamstress without a cause, party/event planner, plate and people collector, wood floor refinisher, gardener, den mother, dog trainer, researcher, tutor, physical therapist, family and friend caretaker, volunteer, bookkeeper, Meals on Wheels deliverer, cabby, and soccer mom before soccer moms were suckered into using vans; and seat belts! For gatherings, in the huge Lamb family playground of a yard, of battalions of neighboring Pierce, Ahrens, Gersdorf, Ellis, Neff, Wiese, Giancola, and Sisson family kids, often 18 or more (unless other neighborhoods' kids joined in for mostly peaceful baseball, basketball, football, sledding, motorcycle racing, snowball fight, tag, kick the can, red rover, and hope to see the ghost tonight comrades; no story times), she and her mother-in-law who she had taken into her home, became the neighborhood nurse, umpire, referee, policeman, boss and warden; till Merle came home that is, or a baseball hit Vera's house on the other side of the block and Vera had to shout out a window.

A game show aficionado, without multi syllabic hifalutin lingo like that she typed into the too-numerous-to-count college term and law school papers for her sons and future daughter-in-law, she typed tediously without complaint for years (mostly on a real typewriter to boot, with liquid white out for that rare typo her sister, Pauline, would never have made). From a Piper Cub passenger seat beside Merle, to the back of his Harley, she was a dauntless powerhouse and force to be reckoned with (how else would one raise her valiant Williams Syndromer through the grades, a teacher, and a lawyer). A state fair-goer, avid card and bingo competitor with family and friends and casino surfer, she maintained her driver's license for short spins in her 1995 Chevy Astro van.

For Ruth, a family member or friend in need, was a friend indeed, even should it make her bleed. A therapist, counselor and sounding board "Pumpkin Head" Yoda, "Ruthie's" boundless care and concern for others knew no hurdles too numerous, or high to clear, let alone fear; a liberating woman, she imbued that drive in the psyche of all drawn to her web of compassion. As her last, few, peaceful breaths, subsided with serene serenity, the swirling world about her went temporarily silent, enveloped in the unbounded love of our ultimate servant. OH mother; wonderful mother, behold what's now yours!

Ruth lived in her and Merle's only home at 1701 Third, and was the last surviving member of her generation in the Lamb and Parker families. Her 69 years of marriage to her devoted and doting 99-year-old Merle ended with his death on her birthday in 2021; faithful son Dennis Eugene Lamb, predeceased her in 2019; her parents, brother Rex Eugene, two sisters and their husbands, Eleanor and Harold Thompson, and Pauline and Herchel Griffith also predeceased her as did a nephew, Kenny Griffith. Survivors are her daughter Diane Sue Lamb, son Dale Allen Lamb and wife Mary, grandson Jacob Allen Lamb, many special caring nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews, other extended family relatives and good friends.