



Elsie Davidson Carr

August 14, 1906 - March 10, 2008

With joy in her heart and great anticipation, Elsie Carr has entered into the presence of her Lord. She was 101 years old.

On Aug. 14, 1906, Elsie was born. She grew up in a devout, close-knit, Christian farm family near Sheridan, Mo. As a child, the love of God and the wonder of His creation captured her imagination and became a prominent thread in the tapestry of her life, which indelibly touched every member of her family and all of those who knew her. It was the richest of her legacies.

As a young girl in high school Elsie excelled. She was a cheerleader, captain of the debating team, won the declamatory contest as the best speaker in her school, and was the president and valedictorian of her graduating class.

Upon graduation, Elsie taught in a one-room country school before being married on Sept. 1, 1925, to Doy Henry Carr in Bedford, Iowa. Immediately after being married, both she and her husband attended Northwest Missouri State Teachers College in Maryville, Mo. Throughout the remainder of her life she was a homemaker, mother and volunteer worker, supporting her husband, who worked as a principal and superintendent of a consolidated grade and high school in Northwest Missouri, as owner and publisher of a newspaper in Elmo, Mo., as a civil servant working for the Federal Prison Service and as a career military officer. Shortly after he retired from the Army as a colonel in 1961, they moved to their dream home in Calistoga, Calif. After the death of her husband in 1964, she sold her home in California and relocated near her daughter, Anita, and her husband, Hugh Crowe, in Corvallis in 1968.

Some examples of the many volunteer positions Elsie held are: she served as the District Republican Committee Woman in Pennsylvania, worked as a volunteer “Grey Lady” helping wounded soldiers evacuated during the Korean War to the Tokyo Hospital, taught English to Japanese students in Tokyo, and served as president of the Distaff Organization which consisted of all the wives of military and civilian personnel on the Atlantic side of the Panama Canal.

In addition, Elsie has always been very active and supportive of church activities wherever she has been. During her early life, she taught Sunday school, served as superintendent of the Sunday school, sang in the choir and played the piano for her church. Since coming to Corvallis, she has been a member of Calvin Presbyterian Church. At Calvin, she served as a deacon, in many other church positions, and provided leadership and mentorship to the young girls in the church. Her Christmas Tea Parties for the young girls of the church were legend.

Elsie’s other talents included oil, water and pastel painting; flower arranging; the making of ceramics and bateaus; the writing of many short stories; and she won a national essay contest in her then over-90 age group with her winning letter published in a commemorative book called “Healthy Aging ... Inspirational Letters from Americans.”

Throughout Elsie’s life she lived in 12 states and also spent several years living overseas in Japan, Germany and the Panama Canal Zone. Over this period she experienced both excitement and a few narrow escapes best described with an extract from her own writings: “I’ve been tumbled out of bed during an earthquake, barely escaped from a flash flood in a National Park, watched from a block away while a tornado demolished a two-story brick building back in Missouri, saw trees uprooted and tiles blown off my house during a typhoon in Tokyo, lived through a hurricane in Panama, ridden a runaway horse, been in a car-wreck where two people were critically injured, and even chased by a blue-racer snake when five years old.”

Elsie had three great loves in her life: her family, her country and her God.

She was an extraordinary homemaker, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and great-great-grandmother. In spite of many military moves, her home was always a place of beauty, graced with pictures she had painted and decor of her own making. For her children and grandchildren, she was always there — with wonderful aromas coming from her kitchen, help with any project and always a chapter of “Heidi” or “Black Beauty” to be read at bedtime.

Elsie was a patriot. She had been around the world and seen first-hand the enormous effort and sacrifices being made by our country to improve the condition of the world’s people, by freeing them from their tyrants, setting up free societies and providing aid to a hurting world. She decried those who sat at home, derived their only information from the evening news and had nothing but criticism for America.

Elsie saw herself as a child of God. Hers was not a complicated theology. She had a very pure and simple faith and a strong belief in prayer. Many people came to her and asked for prayer because it seemed that God honored her prayers in a special way. She loved her church family at Calvin as her own and looks forward to welcoming each one into heaven as time goes by. God has always been with her to give her love, joy, peace, comfort and hope — and on a few occasions provide the help she needed that can be called nothing short of miracles! Even at the end she was strengthened and sustained by Christ Jesus!

Elsie passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 10, surrounded by her family. Let us celebrate! She has finished the race! May it be said well done! Be Thou at Peace!

Elsie was preceded in death by her husband, Doy Henry Carr; by her parents, Alonzo Bartlett and Tressie Barbara Davidson; by her brothers, Percy, Gordon and Oakley Davidson; by her sister, Olgaretta Wildman; and by her granddaughter, Karen Crowe. Survivors include her sister, Pauline Huff of Nebraska City, Neb.; daughter, Anita and husband, Hugh Crowe, of Corvallis;

her son, Eldon (Al) and wife, Anna Carr, of Corvallis; five grandchildren: Steve Crowe and wife Kathy, of Corvallis; Matt Carr and wife, Natalya, of Citrus Heights, Calif.; Mark Crowe and wife, Judy, of Sparks, Nev.; Cathe Avila and husband, Dean, of Issaquah, Wash.; and Susan Schreiber and husband, Patrick, of Sammamish, Wash. She has six great-grandchildren: Matt and Andy Crowe of Corvallis; Angie and Brandon Crowe of Sparks, Nev.; and Derek and Elena Schreiber of Sammamish, Wash. She has two great-great-granddaughters: Misty and Autumn Crowe of Sparks, Nev. She also has many nieces, nephews and their descendants too numerous to list.

A memorial service is planned for 1 p.m. Monday, March 17, at Calvin Presbyterian Church, 1736 N.W. Dixon St., Corvallis. A graveside service will also be conducted at a later time to be announced, at Golden Gate National Cemetery, San Bruno, Calif. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that memorial donations in Elsie's name be made to Calvin Presbyterian Church Building Fund in care of McHenry Funeral Home, 206 N.W. Fifth St., Corvallis, OR 97330.