



Muriel Gwillim

June 30, 1916 - July 23, 2011

Muriel Smith Gwillim was born June 30, 1916, to Eddy and Maude Smith of Corvallis.

She had two older sisters, Verna Burch and Lois Gochenour, and a half-sister, Edith Compton. Her first home was located half a mile north of Corvallis, where her parents owned a 40-acre farm. The house stood where Albertsons market is today. When Muriel was 4 years old, her parents sold that farm and moved to the Irish Bend area.

She attended Irish Bend Grade School; Monroe Union High School, where she received the Balfour Award, given for scholarship, loyalty and achievement, upon graduation; and Oregon Normal School in Monmouth to become a teacher. Growing up on the farm, she drove her father's Clydesdale horses, which pulled the combine and did everything that needs doing on a farm.

She was very athletic, and loved sports. She played baseball and basketball against competing schools. She was voted outstanding player of the year in basketball her sophomore year. The school also won championships in both basketball and baseball, and won the Benton County championship for basketball in 1932.

When Muriel was 19, she taught at Indian Creek in Lane County, and had 23 pupils in all eight grades. She was also the janitor, and started the wood stove in the mornings. She kept a bottle of turpentine on her desk to rid her students of ticks. She made \$75 a month. She had just begun taking flying lessons

when World War II started, and that was the end of that venture.

She taught at several schools before meeting her future husband, Chris Gwillim, who was a high steel painter at the time, at a dance. She was not going to marry a farmer, but he surprised her. She still ended up on a farm in the Irish Bend area, where she helped her husband and did all the things she wasn't ever going to do again.

Here she raised two children, Vincent Gwillim and Susan Gwillim Fields. They went to the Palm Springs area in California during the wintertime. She loved reading, flowers and card games, and played tennis until she was 82. She had a positive attitude all her life and had many friends whom she cherished. She traveled to different areas of the country with her neighbors and friends and had a life filled with good times.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband and her three sisters. Muriel is survived by Vincent and Dolly Gwillim of Monroe; Susan and Ed Fields of Monroe; stepson Gerald Gwillim of Alaska; grandchildren Sherri Sand of Baker City, Mark Gwillim of Monroe, Jeffrey Fields of Monroe and Matthew Fields of Corvallis; and 13 great-grandchildren. She was very much loved and will be greatly missed.

Memorial services are set for 2 p.m. Friday, July 29, at the Monroe United Methodist Church. Private burial will take place at Twin Oaks Cemetery.

Memorial donations in Muriel's name can be directed to the Monroe United Methodist Church General Fund in care of McHenry Funeral Home, 206 N.W. Fifth St., Corvallis, OR 97330.