

Elsie Johnston

Elsie Johnston, 94, of Grinnell died Saturday, April 14, 2018, at the Mayflower Community Health Care Center in Grinnell.

A private family graveside service and burial will be on Saturday, April 21, at Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell.

A Celebration of Life service is pending in July at the Carman Center of the Mayflower Community.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the Elsie Johnston Memorial Fund to be designated by family for local causes. *GH-R 4-19-2018*

Elsie Johnston *GH-R 4-23-2018*



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Elsie was born on July 16, 1923, in Klemme, Iowa, the daughter of Frank F. and Ella A. Ridder Ward. She was raised in Klemme in the midst of the Great Depression and her parents rented a home that had no electricity, no central heat, and

no running water. She was a 1940 graduate of Klemme High School and a 1944 graduate of the University of Iowa with a degree in Home Economics. For a year after her graduation, Elsie taught school.

On July 11, 1945, she was united in marriage with Dwight L. Johnston, at the Klemme United Methodist Church. The couple lived in Concord, California, and in 1958 they built a home in Lafayette, California. While living in California, they had three children, Laura, Bruce and Clarke. Elsie was a very efficient homemaker and home economist. She enjoyed gardening, housekeeping and spending quality time with her family which became memorable. As her children grew, Elise decided to return to teaching via substituting. During her time as a substitute teacher, she enjoyed teaching science and home economics. In 1972, they moved to Houston, Texas, and after Dwight's retirement in 1984, they retired to Grinnell where they built a new home. They later moved to the Mayflower Community in 2002.

Faith was very important to Elsie and her strong Christian faith had been a considerable influence in her daily life. She attended and was very active in the Presbyterian Church and later the United Church of Christ-Congregational. Her contribution was often through music since she was talented in that area.

Elise was a very strong independent woman. She knew the value of hard work, goal-setting and having a loving home. She kept a strong work ethic and never gave up. She made good use of her time! Traveling with Dwight was usually filled with marvels and education. Their golden years together were truly a glittering example of a life well-lived. She had lived the American dream.

Elsie is survived by her two sons, Bruce Johnston of Albany, California, and Clarke Johnston of Willits, California. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Dwight in 2004; her daughter, Laura in 1998; and two brothers, Chester Ward and the other in infancy.