

Dr. Ruth C. Webb

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Dr. Ruth C. Webb, 89, of Grinnell, Iowa, died on Friday, March 8, 2013, at the Mayflower Health Care Center in Grinnell.

A memorial service will be held at 1:30 p.m., Thursday, March 28, 2013, at the United Church of Christ-Congregational in Grinnell.

Memorials may be directed to the Mayflower Human Needs Fund and sent in care of the Smith Funeral Home, P.O. Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Ruth was born on June 1, 1923, at Fort Shafter in Honolulu, Hawaii, to William H. and Ruth Cameron Webb. Her father was an officer in the United States Army and the



family lived in army quarters in Hawaii and subsequently in Massachusetts. Ruth was afflicted with cerebral palsy at birth and was cared for by her family and attended special schools in Florida, Maryland and Massachusetts. In June of 1948, she graduated cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, with a major in psychology from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. Later, she received a Masters Degree in education from Syracuse University in New York. Following her education at Syracuse, she attended the Institute of Logopedics in Wichita, Kansas, where she improved her speech skills and learned to live independently. Ruth moved to Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, to live with her parents and volunteered as a psychologist at a day school for retarded children. In June of 1963, she received a Ph.D degree from the University of Illinois in Champaign, Illinois. For a short time, she worked as a psychologist in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and, for twenty years at the Glenwood State Hospital and School in Glenwood, Iowa. She retired in January of 1990 and moved to the Mayflower Community in Grinnell.

She was the author of three books, "Journey Into Personhood," a memoir published by the University of Iowa Press in 1994; "How Abs See Gimps" (2002); and "Frances Becomes A Person" (2005), detailing the struggles of her long-time devoted companion, Frances, who struggled with minor retardation.

Apart from being inducted into various educational societies during her college years, Ruth was honored as the Handicapped Iowan of the Year in 1971 by Governor Robert D. Ray. She was a member of the United Church of Christ-Congregational in Grinnell, the United Cerebral Society, Camp Farthest Out, the American Psychological Association, the Iowa Psychological Association, the American Association on Mental Retardation and the National Retardation Association.

Ruth is survived by her brother, William David Webb of Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, and four nieces, Andra Minio, Deena Moss, Aerie Webb Anderson and Tara Webb Duey. She was preceded in death by her parents.