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**Mary 'Pat' Pierce** *6-30-2022*



Mary "Pat" Pierce, 91, of Grinnell, died on Monday, June 27, 2022, at St. Francis Manor in Grinnell.

Visitation began 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29, 2022, at the Smith Funeral Home in Grinnell and her family will receive friends from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

A graveside service was held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 30, 2022, at Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell with the Rev. Scott Foley, pastor of St. Mary Catholic Church, officiating.

Memorials may be designated to St. Mary Catholic Church or to the Kellogg Historical Society, and mailed in care

of the Smith Funeral Home, PO Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112. Memories and condolences may be shared with Pat's family online at [www.smithfh.com](http://www.smithfh.com).

Mary Patricia Hotchkin was born the daughter of Charles Towne Hotchkin and Mary Amelia (DeHart) Hotchkin on October 2, 1930, in Kellogg, Iowa. She was the first girl in her family. Her siblings always referred to her as "Sister." However, with that title came a lot of responsibility to learn housekeeping, cooking, and caring for her four younger siblings. She graduated in 1948 from Kellogg High School, where she participated in basketball, cheerleading, yearbook and school paper, and school plays.

Pat was united in marriage to James "Joe" Miller Pierce on January 1, 1950, at St. Mary Catholic Church Rectory in Grinnell. The couple resided in Oskaloosa, Ottumwa, and Marengo, Iowa before making their home in Grinnell. Their marriage was blessed with four children: Mary Jo, Dawna, Jim, and Terri. Pat and Joe were a very hard-working young couple, each working five or six days a week. Even though Pat had to run a pretty tight ship, she loved when her siblings from Washington came back to Iowa with their families for a few days, and always enjoyed visits with near-by relatives on the weekends.

Pat and Joe each came from families of seven children, so there were lots of cousins and lots of large gatherings. From the first time she was called "Aunt Pat" on her wedding day until her final days, she was a beloved aunt and never missed a Pierce-Winchell-Claussen reunion in Kildduff, Kellogg or Newton. Three of Pat's siblings settled in Washington, and it was important to her that her own children knew their out-of-state cousins as well. She was the last surviving aunt on both the Pierce and Hotchkin sides, often referred to as the family historian.

In many ways Pat was a woman before her time, especially when she returned to full-time work in March, 1954, at AB Hamilton and Sons as a secretary and eventual office manager. She stayed there for nearly 60 years. She loved and later missed being part of the downtown community. That office was a favorite stopping-off place for her own children after school, and for relatives and old friends during later years. Hamilton's customers always knew that they could call Pat at home on the weekends whenever an insurance situation arose.

Pat and Joe began to travel with their family when they took a two-week family vacation to Washington and California in the summer of 1962. They almost always traveled to places where there were relatives to visit. Pat and Joe continued to make regular road trips throughout the Midwest and to the West Coast after their children were grown.

As their family grew, Pat and Joe enjoyed spending more time with their grandchildren. All seven looked forward to spending nights at Grandma and Grandpa's house, which often included shopping or visits to local sites. Pat and Joe never missed celebrating milestones with them. Pat remembered each one's birthday and looked forward to everyone visiting on Christmas night.

Pat and Joe were fixtures in the Grinnell community, with their active involvement in the VFW. Pat served many, many years as the local as well as the 4th District Treasurer. She and Joe sold poppies on Poppy Day and organized the annual Memorial Day ceremony at Hazelwood Cemetery. They were also active members of St. Mary's Catholic Church. Weekends and even vacations were planned around attendance at Sunday Mass.

Pat and Joe purchased their first home in 1954, and Pat lived there for the next 68 years, next door to Merle and Ruth Lamb and family that entire time. Together they raised their families and watched their views go from almost country to a housing development. New neighbors were welcomed, and Pat was grateful for the help she received from them after Joe passed in 2008.

Pat is survived by four children, Mary Jo (Randy) Hangartner of Decorah, Dawna Elliott of Grinnell, Jim (Bev) Pierce of Kellogg, and Terri (Jeff) Walker of Des Moines; seven grandchildren, Jessica Pierce, Erica (Dave) Kelderman, Leslie (Dallas) Brickman, Myra (David) Belarde, Aaron Walker, Michael (Aimee) Hangartner, and Adam (Tiffany) Walker; 15 great-grandchildren; and one great great grandchild. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Joe Pierce in 2008; great grandson, Mason Belarde; and siblings Neil Hotchkin, David Hotchkin, Dennis Hotchkin, Diane Byrd, Hope Cockerton, and Stephen Hotchkin.