

Mary Jane Rickard



Mary Jane Rickard, 87, of Ames, formerly of Grinnell, died Sunday, Feb. 25, 2007, at The Abington on Grand nursing home in Ames.

A funeral service will be held Friday, March 2, at 10 a.m. at Smith Funeral Home with the Rev. Kerry Lake of New Sharon Friends Church officiating. Interment will take place in Chester Cemetery, rural Grinnell. Friends may call at Smith Funeral Home one hour prior to the service. Memorials may be made to Union Mills Church in care of Smith Funeral Home. Online condolences may be submitted to the Rickard family at www.smithfh.com.

She was born Nov. 5, 1919, in Cooper, Iowa, the daughter of Reese and Florence Blackmer Ellett. She was raised and educated in Perry, Iowa. On Jan. 3, 1936, she was united in marriage with Ralph R. Rickard in Newton. To this union five children were born, Roberta, Martin, Carol, Nancy and Michael. Following their marriage the couple resided in Grinnell and operated Rickard Electric. The couple then lived in Newton; in Gilbert for 15 years and New Sharon for 23 years.

She was a member of Union Mills Church and more recently of the Friends Church in New Sharon. She was a vocalist at many weddings, funerals and other events. She encouraged her children to study and pursue higher education. At the age of 50 she completed the GED, then attended Iowa State University in Ames where she graduated at the top of her class with a degree in nutrition. She will be especially remembered for her legacy of knitting and crocheting: Each member of her family has received a gift that either was knitted or crocheted by her fingers. She also enjoyed cooking, baking, needlework, gardening and teaching at Sunday School.

She is survived by her children Roberta Verwers of Gladbrook, Marty Rickard of Fort Myers, Fla., Carol Skjoldal of Ames, Nancy Hose of Wyoming, Iowa, and Michael Rickard of Traer; 15 grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, five great great grandchildren, and two sisters, Julia Davis of Oskaloosa and Jo Anne Blankenfeld of Grinnell. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Ralph Rickard on March 5, 1984; one grandson; two great grandchildren; two brothers, Clive Ellett and Reese Ellett and her sister Genevieve Needham.

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