



Opal Forsell

February 24, 1909 - December 2, 2011

Long-time Wadena resident and former Wadena Public Library Board member, Opal Forsell died December 2, 2011, at the age of 102, at Fair Oaks Lodge in Wadena. Opal Cecelia Sherman was the fourth of five children born to George and Ida (Otte) Sherman of rural Ulen, MN on February 24, 1909. She graduated in 1926 from the Ulen High School. Opal received her teaching certificate from Moorhead Normal School and taught in rural schools near Twin Valley and Perley, MN. On August 31, 1932 she married Albert B. Forsell. They farmed, raised their family of four children and were active in the Wild Rice Church and the Twin Valley community. The County Extension Homemakers Club, 4-H, and the School Board Mothers club were a special focus for Opal. Albert died in 1962 and Opal returned to Moorhead State College to complete her Bachelors Degree. For 10 years she was school librarian in the Menahga Public Schools. At the same time she moved to Wadena, MN and shared a home with her sister, Margaret Sherman. Opal valued the friendship of family, friends and neighbors. Over a long span of years she kept an active correspondence and interest with a wide circle of friends. Always she was an engaged member of her church, community organizations, and activities. Her years of service on the Wadena Public Library Board and the Kitchigami Regional Library Board were particularly important to her. She and her sister Margaret were consummate gardeners and their Wadena neighbors enjoyed their flower gardens with them. She especially treasured her grandchildren and maintained a special relationship

with each of them. A great gift in her last years was the arrival of her 15 great-grandchildren. Opal was predeceased by her parents; siblings Donald, Merle, Lawrence, and Margaret Sherman; her husband Albert; and daughter Jenny Vergin. Survivors include her son Dennis (Elaine) Forsell of Detroit Lakes, MN; daughter Carol (Jack) Duoos of Coon Rapids, MN, and daughter Gail (Richard) Pierson of Federal Way, WA; ten grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. Memorial services will be held on Monday, December 12, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Wadena with Pastor Marilyn Breckenridge officiating. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service. Honorary pallbearers were her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Burial will be in Wild Rice Cemetery near Twin Valley.

Tribute Wall

GL

“ This last weekend I passed along a bird carving that Opal gave to our son in high school. She got to know our family through church and always took time to talk to Brian, send him a card or just treat him extra special. It meant a lot to us. God bless the memory of Opal. Sincerely, Gail Levenson

Gail Levenson - April 23, 2025 at 10:16 PM

ST

“ I am so late in getting to this. I was saddened to hear of Opal's death. It is so hard to lose a parent. You were all lucky to have had your mother for so long. She lived her life to the fullest and I know the memories and joys you shared will keep her in your hearts forever. With Sincere Sympathy. Shirley Thompson

Shirley Thompson - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ I have known Opal for years and had the pleasure of sharing her room at Fair Oaks Lodge - I am so sorry for her family's loss. I will keep Opal and her family in my prayers.

Jean Johnson - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM

GC

“ Our thoughts are with you Gail, Carol, Dennis and all - I considered Opal one of my great friends - she was an inspiration to me Gladys

Gladys and Charlie Chase - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ Dennis, Carol, Gail, and families,

Some of my earliest memories from Wild Rice as a child include your family. Your mother and grandmother was a remarkable woman who taught me much as a 4-H leader but, perhaps more importantly, modeled what being an active community and church leader means. I always enjoyed my visits with Jenny to your home; and I take comfort in knowing she has been reunited with both of her parents, as well as our loving Savior, in heaven. My love and sympathy to all of you; you are in my thoughts and prayers.

Kathy Solseth

Kathy (Olson) Solseth - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM

MK

“ *Opal was a wonderful friend. She was truly interested in hearing about our family, what each was doing with their lives. She seemed to know everyone in her church congregation, including at least three generations.*

She maintained her curiosity about topics of interest, about the news around the world. She kept scrapbooks and journals that will be precious to her descendants far into the future. It was always fun to spend time with Opal, at her home or mine. I will miss her. I know she is in the care of God now. She had strong faith and led an exemplary life.

Mary Ellen Kennedy Kollodge - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM

SN

“ Thank you Opal for all that you contributed during your long life. We enjoyed getting to know you the couple times we were honored to meet you when you were out in the Northwest visiting your daughter Gail. Everyone should strive to live their lives like you did yours. Our prayers and thoughts are with all of the immediate family members.

Scott, Denise, Tim, Andrew Neumann - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KN

“ So sorry for your loss. We saw you Gail, and your mother many times at Fair Oaks when we were visiting our mother, Noreen Reece. She will be missed, but make sure you take care of yourself. We are thinking of you.

Karen Erkenbrack & Lois Nelson - December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM