

Helene Margaret Van Asselt, 94

Jan. 28, 1922 - Jan. 2, 2017

IRWIN – Helen Margaret Van Asselt, the daughter of Henry John and Maria Magdalena (Heesch) Radden, was born on Jan. 28, 1922, in Halbur. She grew up in Irwin, living above the Chicago and Northwestern Depot, where her father was the depot agent. Helen attended Irwin schools, and graduated with the class of 1939. She was a 4-H member, and during high school, participated in the Girls Glee Club, played basketball, and was a cheerleader.

Helen met Gerrit John "Dutch" Van Asselt at a sleigh ride party on Main Street in Irwin. The couple married on sunny July 14, 1940, in Irwin, and honeymooned in Sioux City, where Helen enjoyed her first roller coaster ride.

Dutch served in the United States Navy for three years and then returned to Irwin and built the family home. Helen worked on Wednesday and Saturday evenings at the Irwin Drug Store. When her daughters were older, she washed dishes at the Irwin Community School. Helen was a weather observer for 17 years, and reported local news for the Harlan and Denison newspapers for 25 years. She had the honor of having an article, "Living in the Train Depot Agent's Quarters", published in A Living History of Southwest Iowa - Outside Privies and Dinner Pails. She also wrote an article about her family and the Irwin Barbershop for the Irwin Centennial History Book.

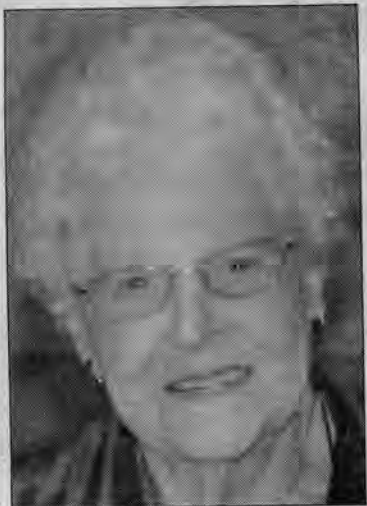
Following Dutch's death on August 20, 1984, Helen remained in their home in Irwin. In September 2012, Helen became a resident of the Manilla Manor in Manilla, Iowa, where she made new friends and took part in many of the activities.

Helen was baptized Lutheran, and later became a member of the Irwin United Methodist Church in Irwin, where she helped with weddings and funerals, and was active in the women's organization. She loved growing grapes, and was known for her grape pie and jelly.

Helen M. Van Asselt died Monday, Jan. 2, 2017, at the Manilla Manor in Manilla. She had reached the age of 94 years, 11 months, five days.

Helen was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Gerrit John "Dutch" Van Asselt; one sister, Ruby Desbien; and two brothers, Pershing Radden and Marvin Radden. She is survived by two daughters, Linda (Tom) Lund of Kila, MT, and Joan Osborne of Brainerd, MN; two grandchildren, Linda Osborne of Brainerd, MN, and Joshua Tomsu of Broussard, LA; and other relatives and friends.

The funeral service was held Friday, Jan. 6, 2017, at the Irwin United Methodist Church with Pastor Laurie Riley officiating. Helen Warren served as the pianist. Casket bearers were Tom Lund, Alan Petersen, Steve Petersen, Paul Steenhusen, and Kevin Borkowski. Burial was in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Irwin. The Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home in Harlan, was in charge of the arrangements. Condolences may be left online at www.burmeister-johannsen.com.



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