



Shirley Licha

December 12, 1930 - December 28, 2008

Shirley Anne Licha (nee Grotberg), December 12, 1930 to December 28, 2008. Our dear mother left this earth in style, just as she had lived her life. She was born in Valley City during the depression to a farming family who valued hard work, strong moral compass, education, family, music, and fun. Shirley lived up to all those ideals. She graduated from Valley City High School in 1948, and had started her freshman year of college in Valley City when a dashing, sophisticated, war hero and upper classman swept her off her feet. That was our dad, Charles A. Licha. They married at the Congregational Church in Valley City on January 6, 1949, and exactly nine months later, they had their first child, Pamela Sue.

Mom and her small family lived in Linton, North Dakota where Dad taught high school English until starting a new career as Army aviator during the Korean War. Over the next twenty years, mom was an Army officer's wife, which often meant being both mom and dad to her children, who eventually were five in number. This life took her to several Army posts in the United States, as well as to the Republic of Panama, and to Peru. In Panama, washdays were particularly interesting on days she found anaconda snakes in her washer—talk about a wring cycle!!

Despite her role as an Army wife, she developed her own interests, which had always been rooted in music and literature. In Lima, Peru, she participated in

the Lima Theater Workshop, a diverse troupe of expatriates, attachés and other glamorous types. She took silver smithing classes, and produced many lovely pieces of flatware for her home.

However, Mom never forgot who she was or where she was from. She would entertain her children with stories of life on the farm when she was growing up. She and her sister Mary, closest in age, shared many chores together as young children, such as tending the vegetable garden, tending sheep, and helping their mother chase down the chickens and turkeys to butcher. That was the only butchering that Grandpa Grotberg let the girls do or see, Mom told us. Mom also taught us the songs from her childhood, including the lullabies her parents had sung to her. She has given us a legacy that we have passed to our children, as well.

In late 1968, Shirley, Chuck and family moved back to North Dakota for my father to complete his last assignment, teaching ROTC classes at NDSU. Once in Valley City again, Mom got involved in local theater and music groups, including the choir at the Congregational Church. Mom returned to college in 1973, majoring in English and Choral Music. By the time she graduated, Dad had died, and she reinvented herself, this time as a single working woman. For the next 20 years, she worked in the Barnes County Auditor's office. Along the way, she served as clerk/secretary of the Barnes County Airport Authority Board.

She didn't stop her activities there, either: she kept books for the Barnes County Historical Museum. She utilized her choral degree in directing the Congregational Church Choir, for over 30 years. In 1988, she and daughter Barbara sang at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. with the Veterans Administration choir. Mom's Scott Irish ancestors from the revolutionary war made her eligible to join the D.A.R., the group that owns Constitution Hall; however, because of her great Norwegian ancestry, she was never uppity

about it.

Other adventures included a trip to England in 1999 with her sister-in-law Margaret Grotberg, niece Amy Anderson, and great niece Tracy Anderson (now Zaun) traveled to England. In March 2008, at the age of 77, she wrote to us, “Now I am totally retired from all those jobs, and I have a cleaning lady, a snow man, and a lawn boy to do the grunt work.” You go girl!

Retirement didn't mean the end of a social or romantic life, however. About nine years ago, Mom and a former high school sweetheart became reacquainted. They thoroughly enjoyed each other's company, and only they know how dear each was to the other. All their children were very happy for them.

Mom had smoked most of her adult life, but finally kicked the habit over fifteen years ago. However, her history stalked her with stealth. Mom got the news of her terminal lung cancer on her 78th birthday, less than three weeks ago. Instead of suffering through futile medical treatments in a hospital, she chose to leave this life on her own terms—at home, in her own bed, with her loved ones by her side. To those of us who saw her through her last days on earth, she gave to us a great gift. We cannot praise the Red River Valley Hospice services enough, who made it all possible.

Shirley Licha is preceded in death by her husband, Charles A. Licha, her parents, Bernard and Sophie Grotberg, and her brothers, Robert Bruce Grotberg, John Grotberg, and William Weir Grotberg. She leaves behind her children, Pamela Sue Scarbrough (Robert), Jeffrey Dean Licha (Valerie), Barbara Licha Perkins (Charles), Elizabeth Anne Licha, and Jonathan Kent Licha (Pamela), as well as grandchildren, Todd Scarbrough, Chad Scarbrough, Gillian Scarbrough, Charles Licha II, Jackson Licha, Jessica

Davidson, Haley Licha, Ian Licha, Reilly Licha, Carlie Licha, and Alex Perkins, and great grandchildren Andrew Kading, Christopher Kading, Cody Scarbrough, Beverly Scarbrough, and Taylor Davidson. She also leaves her sisters, Betty Uloth, Mary (John) Heath, and Jean Huffman and brothers, Perry (Margaret) Grotberg and Morris (Adrian) Grotberg. Among her dear friends, she leaves behind an especially dear friend, Walter Holm.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC **30**. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

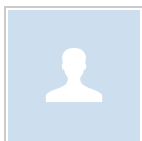
Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel
251 Central Ave. S.
Valley City, ND

Service

DEC **31**. 2:00 PM (CT)

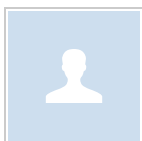
Congregational United Church of Christ
217 4th St. NW
Valley City, ND

Tribute Wall



“ I grew up in Valley City - Shirley Sansburn and my Mom was Marian Sansburn. I attended the Congregational church while in VC. I now live in Hibbing, MN but visited my Mom often & attended church. Marian passed away Dec. 24, 2006 & the funeral was there. I want to send my sympathy to your family - I remember you Mom well, directing & singing in the choir. With sympathy & prayers - Shirley Sansburn Fumia###imported-begin###Shirley Fumia###imported-end##

January 11, 2009 at 06:05 PM



“ We were very saddened to learn of Shirley's passing, and want to express our sympathy to her family, and to share some of our memories. Shirley was such a grand lady, with so much charm, wit, creativity, and a passion for living life to the fullest. We remember many wonderful parties in her home, special among them was a mystery dinner party where everyone was assigned a character to act out in order to solve a murder mystery with the solution given at the dinner table. It was delightful. Most parties at Shirley's usually ended up with everyone gathering around the piano to sing song after song with Shirley tickling the ivory. We have a tape of Shirley entertaining at a party in our home into the wee hours of the morning. It always felt good just to be in Shirley's presence. She had a way of making everyone feel special.

Our deepest sympathy to Shirley's family.###imported-begin###Stuart and Colleen Glazer, and daughter Vicki###imported-end##

January 02, 2009 at 09:38 PM



“ *Mary I am so sorry to hear about Shirleys' death. Reading her obituary brings back all kinds of memories. My deepest sympathy to you and to your families.##imported-begin##faith foster##imported-end##*

January 02, 2009 at 08:25 PM



“ *My heart aches from the news of the loss of your Mother. But by the amazing sharing of her life story, I can see she lead a glorious life filled w/ adventure and love. Take comfort that her memory will live on thru her legacy - her children.*

"To be absent in the body, is to be present with the LORD.

My condolences on the loss of you Mother. My prayers and strength go out to you, Betsy and your family.

Lori Hill##imported-begin##Lori Hill##imported-end##

January 02, 2009 at 04:56 PM



“ Dear Shirley,

Things I remember:

I ask forgiveness for:

The mouse traps I set under the covers while you were asleep.

The waiting for them to go off and then running down the stairs and out the front door into the front yard.

The butterfly paddles that you so skillfully broke over my back in the front yard when I ran outside.

The Frankie and Johnnie song that I sang with lyrics changed to snoocy and shirley.

Then things changed. You got married to Chuck. It wasn't long before Chuck was activated to Korea, and you came home with 2 kids, Pam and Jeff.

Pam was about 4 years old and Jeff was 2. This certainly changed the way we did business on the farm.

Kids were nothing knew to Gramma and Grampa it had just been awhile since they had them living in the space they occupied.

Jeff would go to bed upstairs in a crid in your room, then bang his head against the head board of the crib crying. Grampa would come to the stair well and shout "jeffery get to sleep" and I would here him hit the mattress. Soe times I would go get him and put him in my bed.

Pam always blamed Jeff for eveything. "Jeffery did it" was her favorite saying.

Then Jeff learned that Pam had something on top of her head called "hair". That was the day that Pams world changed. One handful of Hair did the trick.

Then Chuck wrote you that he was coming home and to go down to the Chevrolet dealership and buy the Stingray. That caused alot of problems with Grampa about how foolish a way to spend money. Yet you did it.

When Chuck came home and got you that was the last time I had to share so many memories.

The many Wars you shared with Chuck and eventually losing him had to be troumatic.

The many places you lived, the addition of Barbera, John and Betsy to your family made a matriarch of you surpassed by none.

I was away for all of these later years, but never forgetting the welcome I received when visiting North Dakota, and spending the time at your home.

So rest in peace, Heaven has been waiting for you.

Love Moe

Send e-mail anywhere. No map, no compass. Get your Hotmail® account now.

*It's the same Hotmail®. If by "same" you mean up to 70% faster.
Get your account now.*

*{0}
Mark as read*

Mark as unread

Delete

Junk

Not junk

Print

View message source

*© 2008 Microsoft Privacy Legal Help Central Account
Feedback##imported-begin##Moe Grotberg##imported-end##*

December 31, 2008 at 03:44 PM



*“ Betsy and Family,
Our hearts and prayers are with you. I greatly enjoyed reading your
Mom's obituary. What a life of adventure!
- Greg and Tracey##imported-begin##Tracey & Greg
Runyon##imported-end##*

December 31, 2008 at 10:40 AM



“ I was shocked to learn of Shirley's terminal cancer and then of her passing. My most sincere sympathy & prayers to all her family. I first met Shirley when her musical family moved to a farm near us (circa 1942) & Shirley, Mary & I attended Alderman School together. Later, in college, Chuck was one of my best buddies. I knew Shirley as a multi-talented, kind & loving person. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.##imported-begin##Don Ford##imported-end##

December 31, 2008 at 02:09 AM



“ Sorry of your loss Betsy & family.
We love you.
Tom & Susan##imported-begin##Tom & Susan Schultz##imported-end##

December 31, 2008 at 12:18 AM



“ I'm so sorry to hear of Shirley's death. I got to know Shirley when I worked at the Courthouse. She had such a wonderful personality and was the most beautiful whistler!! She was an amazing lady. God's peace to you all.##imported-begin##Beth (Wieland) Didier##imported-end##

December 30, 2008 at 11:32 AM



“ I was shocked and so sorry to hear about Shirley's illness and death. Shirley and I were in Valley Voices together for a number of years. She was a good musician (a leader in the alto section) and a warm person who helped make the practices and performances fun. My sympathies are with her family.

Noreen Braun###imported-begin###Noreen Braun###imported-end##

December 29, 2008 at 08:18 PM



“ Dear Fellow Grotbergs - I appreciate the beautiful tribute to Shirley by her children, capturing so much of her life journey and her spunk - good job cousins! I have wonderful memories of being "conducted" by Aunt Shirley in our family choir at reunion time, of her taking my husband Chuck and me to the Barnes County Historical Museum (which so impressed us), of gathering at her home with food and drink and music and laughter, of watching her rehearse a summer theater performance, and of her gift of some of the transcribed family lullabies which I will always cherish. Have a blessed time together as you say "farewell" - our family's loving thoughts and prayers are with you.

Rest in Peace, Aunt Shirley.

Sandy Grotberg (Jack's daughter), Chuck Barbour, and family,
Chambersburg PA###imported-begin###Sandy Grotberg###imported-end##

December 29, 2008 at 09:48 AM



“ *Dearest family, this sadness is shared by all of us and with our combined strength we will keep the memory of Shirley alive and well in our hearts. Blessings and prayers.*

*Jim Grotberg and Family
Ann Arbor, MI###imported-begin##James Grotberg##imported-
end##*

December 29, 2008 at 12:08 AM