



Ardelle Florence Learnard

March 3, 1919 - November 19, 2017

Ardelle (Dell) F. Learnard, age 98, formerly of Bradley, Illinois, passed away on Sunday, November 19, 2017 at the Bickford House in Peoria, Illinois. She was born on March 3, 1919 to Willard and Vernor (Smith) Bickford in Gorham, Maine. She married Henry Learnard on November 10, 1939 in Gorham, Maine.

Dell had a life-long commitment to volunteering and was active in community activities in every community she lived in. In Spokane, Washington Dell drove patients to cancer treatments. She participated in the Spokane African Violet Society and cared for over 200 African violets in her home. While living in Warrensburg, Illinois, Dell was introduced to quilting through participation in a quilting circle in the Warrensburg United Methodist Church. After moving to Bradley, she was an active volunteer at the Exploration Station, creating many of the children's costumes. Additionally, she volunteered in the Kankakee schools and was known as "Grandma Dell" to many students. She truly enjoyed reading to the younger students.

Dell is survived by two daughters, Stella (Bob) McCray of Sacramento, California and Anne (Bill) Coghill of Dunlap, Illinois; three grandchildren, Laurye, Jerry, and Stephanie; two great-grandchildren, Brit and Austin; one great-great-grand daughter, Gigi; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, parents, and two sisters, Vivian (Bickford) Morrell and Rena (Bickford) Stone.

A time of gathering will take place on Tuesday, December 19, 2017, from 10

a.m. until the time of service at 11 a.m. at Schreffler Life Story Funeral Homes Bourbonnais Chapel. Inurnment will follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois.

Memorials to the Alzheimer's Association as well as flowers would be appreciated.

To share a memory, upload a photo, or to sign Ardelle's guestbook, please visit www.schrefflerfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 W. Hoff Road
Elwood, IL 60421
(815) 423-9958
<http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/abrahamlincoln.asp>

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 19. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Schreffler Funeral Home - Bourbonnais Chapel
1100 N. Convent St.
Bourbonnais, IL 60914
(815) 932-2421

Funeral Service

DEC 19. 11:00 AM (CT)

Schreffler Funeral Home - Bourbonnais Chapel
1100 N. Convent St.
Bourbonnais, IL 60914
(815) 932-2421

Tribute Wall



“ *Ardelle Florence Learnard*

February 03, 2023 at 04:30 AM



“ *You have our deepest deepest sympathies on the loss of your Mom. They were by far the best neighbors Keith & I ever had. May God Bless you all and comfort you and may she rest in peace she was a beautiful, wonderful, kind and sweet woman! I am so sorry we weren't able to attend her services, Keith & I were on the east coast visiting our children. Keith & Teresa Richert, N. Monroe - Bradley, IL 60915*

Teresa Richert - December 21, 2017 at 09:39 AM



“ *I loved my aunt she was such a remarkable woman..I remember when my dad clyde learnard and my mom maxine took us to visit when henry and delle lived in Spokane Washington it was always great memories.. I always tried to write to her and uncle henry even after they moved to Ill. I started doing photography and used to send them photos for there apartment aunt delle said it gave the m so much joy and made me feel good and as sad as I was when my uncle passed away I am glad they are back together again. Stella was already out of home so I never got to know her but I did meet my cousin anne I am sure they turned out as wonderful as their parents aunt dell will be missed so much*



clara b learnard - December 13, 2017 at 04:51 PM

SJ

“ I so enjoyed her trips to Maine when the three sisters would share their memories of growing up.

I also remember one time when we were visiting in Illinois and she was proudly telling they discovered a leaking pipe in the crawl space. She got some gum and chewed and chewed and chewed it. She then stuck it on the pipe to seal the leak. When the plumber got there, she explained what she had done and got this look of you got to be kidding! When the plumber went to inspect the leak, she overheard him say, By gosh it worked!

She also shared that there was several times when she could not get Uncle Hank to do some work that she wanted done. She noted that she only had to start the job to get him to complete it, as he thought she could not do it properly.

I was unable to visit her in the past few years, but tried to keep in touch by letter. I still find myself thinking I will need to tell her this in my next letter. I will miss sharing my news with her.

Sharon Jordan - December 11, 2017 at 04:55 PM

“ Aunt Dell once told me that the hardest thing she ever did in life was to take her baby Stella, during WW II days, and drive from Maine to the state of Washington to join her (Army) husband, who was stationed there, when she'd never before been out of the state of Maine. Although car tires were rationed due to the war, she was able to get coupons for new ones and make the trip safely all the way across the country in the early 1940s.

When Dell was around eight or nine years old, she and her younger sister Rena walked out to a field to see a bull calf that had recently been born on her family's farm. Wondering if the young bull, chained to a post, would charge at a red cloth, young Rena went into the house to find one. Returning and intending it only as a harmless prank, Rena waved the cloth behind Dell as she moved in front of the bull to pat his face. The young bull lowered his head and charged at Dell, until he ran out of chain. Two days later, Dell's folks took her to get medical attention, as they began to fear that perhaps her arm might be broken. Dell wore a splint all summer and said the best part of it all was that she got out of doing farm chores that whole summer.

Another story Aunt Dell shared was that she frequently played with a younger cousin who lived next door on the family's old homestead. Dell noticed that this cousin wore 'bobby socks' and she desperately also wanted to wear these very fashionable socks, but despite her begging, her father Willard would not hear of it. She was to continue wearing the old-fashioned, over-the-knee, tan cotton stockings that modest young girls wore at that time.

Another story Aunt Dell shared was that she and her two sisters were not allowed to attend neighborhood dances. Her father Willard, a dairy farmer and gifted pianist, played piano at these dances and did not approve of much that he saw take place, beyond the dancing. He loved his daughters dearly and did not want them being part of the shenanigans that regularly took place at the dances.

It was obvious that Aunt Dell enjoyed her final years in Peoria, Illinois' Bickford House and shared with me that it was the perfect place for her. Not only was her maiden name Bickford, she found the book Good Old Times by Elijah Kellogg in that Illinois home's library. The book tells the story of the McLellans, our ancestors from Ireland/Scotland and the second settlers of Gorham, Maine. What are the chances of a book about Dell's ancestors in Gorham, Maine being part of an Illinois retirement home's library!?! So very thankful we got to make the trip from Maine and have a visit with Aunt Dell twice in the past few years. She truly was one precious person and will be greatly missed!

Linda Morrell Verrier - December 05, 2017 at 06:26 AM