



Lorena Smith

August 31, 1923 - April 7, 2016

Smitty's Memorial/Obituary

It's hard to forget someone who gave you so much to remember. Life's journey is not to arrive at the grave safely in a well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, totally worn out and shouting, "Holy cow! What a ride!" Smitty did just that.

Lorena Pearl Clampitt Smith (Smitty) was born in Stillwell, Illinois on August 31, 1923 and took her last breath at Presence St. Mary's Hospital in Kankakee, Illinois on April 7, 2016 at 92 years old. Her body gave out before her spirit did.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Alex and Pearl McMillan Clampitt, her brothers Arlo Clampitt, Paul Clampitt, John Clampitt, and her sister Fern Clampitt Pendola. Lorena is survived by her loving sister and brother-in-law, Kathryn Clampitt Torres and Ignacio Torres of San Antonio, Texas and her faithful brothers and their spouses: Larry and Joyce Clampitt of Paxton, Illinois, Loren and Beth Clampitt of Morris, Illinois, and Terry and Pat Clampitt of East Peoria, Illinois. She is also survived by her dear lifetime friend, Margaret Long of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

One of Lorena's prized possessions was a letter signed by President Harry Truman, thanking her for her years of service during World War II. She served her country in many ways that kept her moving, during World War II and in peacetime. She worked at a torpedo factory in Alexandria, Virginia. She said it was a blast. Lorena also served on a hospital ship as an administrative assistant in 1945 (between Oakland, California and Honolulu, Hawaii) aboard the USS Consolation, later renamed the USS Hope. She had two 1-year tours in Korea while working for the Army Civil Service. While she was stationed at the Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois, the base had Frank Sinatra entertain the troops and Lorena scored a front row seat where she promptly fell asleep in front of old blue eyes. That earned her kitchen patrol (KP) duty.

Most of Smitty's relatives can agree that her being in a kitchen was indeed punishment—mostly for those who ate whatever she cooked. She never developed a knack for preparing food. Instead she chose to hone her orneriness to a fine art—there, she excelled. What she lacked in culinary skills, she made up for with other talents. She sang with a band and pitched for a woman's softball team. Who needs a cookbook when you can throw a strike?

Family always came first for Lorena. She purchased a home for her aging mother Pearl with her military earnings and after Pearl couldn't live on her own, Smitty took care of her for as long as she could physically do it until she had to pass that mantle to Loren and Beth. Pearl lived to be 102 years old, supported by her loving family.

Smitty displayed promise in her ability to speak other languages, as long as the words were salty. She and her mother Pearl developed an endearing greeting in Gaelic for one of her nieces, Cindy Torres Marolt, which was Pog Mo Thoin, meaning "Kiss my butt." That phrase became a mantra between the three of them and apparently, words to live by.

For many years, Smitty lived in Colorado and became a diehard Denver Broncos fan. She owned a beautiful cabin in Breckenridge ski resort because she loved to ski and fish. (She even fished in the pond at the Manteno VA Home not long ago—hook, line, and sinker.) She loved adventure and the open road and owned a recreational vehicle with her friend Margaret (and later had an RV of her own) and she traveled to Canada, Branson, Nashville, and many other places until she finally moved closer to family in Illinois.

Lorena had a deep and lasting affection for dogs of all shapes and sizes. Since dogs are always a good judge of character, they loved her back. Larry and Joyce had given her a fat black pug with a squished face that should've been named Brunswick because the critter looked like a bowling ball. She had a thing for wiping the butts of her dogs after they came in from outside. We often wondered how she could tell which end of that pug did the nasty business, but her dedication to clean doggy booty never wavered.

Lorena couldn't resist getting into mischief. If she wasn't an instigator, she made an excellent partner in crime. She became a commanding officer, giving orders while hiding in a bunker made from an old picnic table, during July 4th bottle rocket wars on her visits to Texas, and she was always in the middle of a good prank, including mailing fresh horse poop to Barnacle Bill the Sailor, sent from the Fair Young Maiden. Loren and Beth (and the mailman) can attest to that. And who dresses up as a walking outhouse at a military costume ball in Korea, slinging strands of toilet paper? Smitty was one of a kind.

Every Wednesday was "ladies hair day." I'm sure that won't change in heaven. Without fail, she'd get up at 4:00 am to beat everyone in the VA home to her coveted first in line spot. Sometimes a girl has to look pretty and a flash of red nail polish always made her happy.

Lorena couldn't sit idle. At her VA nursing home, she volunteered wherever they needed her help and filled her days in service to others until the day she died. She often sang little ditties with questionable lyrics and taught those 'face blushing' lines to the nursing home staff. If you knew Lorena, sing one of her ditties in her honor today. Sing it loud and proud, like she did. Maybe pick the one about 'cigarettes and whiskey and wild, wild women' or her personal rendition of the birthday song, 'Happy Butt Day.'

She led an uncompromising life, often making tough decisions for a single woman, especially during the time period she lived, when those decisions weren't easy. Even

during hard times, she always kept her humor. Telling a dirty joke or singing an off-color song was another way she hugged you. Smitty always knew how to laugh. She will be missed but never forgotten by the many people who loved her and were blessed to know her.

A memorial service will be held at the Illinois Veterans Home at Manteno, Illinois on Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 2:00 pm. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Lorena's name may be sent to the address below:

Please write on the envelope: In Memory of Lorena Smith – Attn: Volunteer Dept.
Illinois Veterans Home at Manteno (IVHM)
One Veterans Drive
Manteno, IL 60950

“Have you ever lost someone you love and wanted one more conversation, one more chance to make up for the time when you thought they would be here forever? If so, then you know you can go your whole life collecting days, and none will outweigh the one you wish you had back.” Mitch Albom (From his book: For One More Day)

Previous Events

Memorial Service

APR 21. 2:00 PM (CT)

Illinois Veterans Home
Manteno, IL 60950

Tribute Wall



“ *Lorena Smith*

February 03, 2023 at 04:30 AM

CM

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Cindy Marolt - April 12, 2016 at 12:44 PM

CM

“ *My mother, Kathryn, would want me to post for her, since she is computer-challenged. Her last sister, Lorena, spoke to her every week (and sang her face blushing lyrics) on the phone and that meant a lot to my mom. The day Lorena died, we spent hours together, recalling memories. We cried, but mostly laughed at all Lorena's shenanigans. Heaven isn't ready for her. God will have his hands full, but no one in heaven will shine brighter than Smitty and Wednesdays will always be "hair day."*

To the northern Clampitts - we here in Texas send our love. Even though my mom can't make the trip to Illinois for the memorial, we will have a simultaneous event of our own in San Antonio and will be releasing helium balloons (with messages for Lorena tied to each one). We love you.

Cindy Torres Marolt & Kathryn Clampitt Torres (and Dad)

Cindy Marolt - April 11, 2016 at 01:53 PM

CM

“ *My aunt Lorena was always like a second mother to me and I must have inherited her funny bone. She made a tireless conspirator when it came to pranks and family always came first with her. She will be missed. We've all been blessed to know her.*

Pog Mo Thoin, Lorena. It also means, "I love you." Kiss grandma Pearl for all of us.

Cindy Torres Marolt

Cindy Marolt - April 11, 2016 at 01:39 PM

CM

“ 4 files added to the album *New Album Name*



Cindy Marolt - April 11, 2016 at 12:20 PM

CM

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Cindy Marolt - April 11, 2016 at 08:52 AM

CM

“ 2 files added to the album *New Album Name*



Cindy Marolt - April 11, 2016 at 08:41 AM