



Edyth M. Root

Life Story

Edyth Root was an incredibly generous woman who changed people's lives for the better. By expressing her love through her actions, her words and her genuine compassion, she allowed herself to be a good friend to everyone she met. A true lady, Edyth sought no fanfare, no praise or admiration for the ways in which she served others; she gladly did it with her whole heart.

In 1918, life in the United States was very different from what it is today. Things such as women's right to vote, long distance travel and communications and workplace rights and safety were not realities. A worldwide war was just ending in Europe, whose casualties amassed in the millions, piling in comparison to the flu epidemic, which killed more than 20 million people around the world. In the midst of all these changes, Fern and Myrtle (McWilliams) Tarbell of Paw Paw, Michigan, were celebrating a wonderful occasion in their family, the birth of their daughter, Edyth, on September 20, 1918.

Although born in Kalamazoo, Edyth grew up in the small town of Paw Paw, Michigan, the youngest of four Tarbell children. Her father earned a living as a butcher while her mother stayed home, caring for the children and their home. From a very young age, Edyth had a soft heart for dogs, and always had one running around her home throughout her lifetime. She was a good student and was active in her senior class at Paw Paw High School. After graduating in 1936, Edyth attended 2 years of business college, honing excellent accounting skills, which she put to good use at Upjohn for 32 years in the Accounting Department.

In 1947, a wonderful thing happened to Edyth, she married the love of her life, Gordon Root, on November 29, 1947, in Angola, Indiana. The couple spent the next 44 years together, living, laughing and loving each other with all their hearts. Edyth even saved many of their love notes through the years; they were treasures of her heart. The couple lived in Kalamazoo most of their married lives. Gordon worked at Kesner Trucks and Sutherland Paper Company and was also a very skilled woodworker. They had a cottage on Cedar Lake and enjoyed spending many summers by the water. Both enjoyed the outdoors and often hunted and fished together. They were also big travelers and have many great memories of their visits throughout the U.S. in their air stream. After retiring, Edyth and Gordon bought a home in Traverse City in the 1980s and enjoyed living up north until Gordon's death in 1991. This was undoubtedly heartbreaking for Edyth, losing her one true love, and she soon moved back to Kalamazoo to be closer to her family and friends.

Edyth was a true lady in every sense of the word. She was classy and dignified, always taking care to dress nice; a lady who was sophisticated and refined, who knew the value of kindness and never said a bad thing about anyone, yet spoke her mind in the nicest of ways. A woman of great faith, Edyth was sure to care for her church family at St. Martin of Tours Episcopal Church, where she was a longtime member and on the altar guild. Her charitable heart never stopped thinking of helping others as she took

time to sit with Hospice patients and volunteered with the Salvation Army. She was also active in the Women's Club and Ladies Library; Edyth was always very generous with her time and talents.

In her leisure time, Edyth liked listening to music of the Big Bands, birdwatching, watching hockey and cooking; she loved her ice cream and cashews. As an accountant, she was always very detailed, which was also evident in her excellent sewing skills and in her diary she kept of her every day activities. Edyth was truly happiest around her precious dogs, some of which were Peppy, Cindy, and Molly. And when she was on the go in the van, they were right beside her. Several years ago, Edyth was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, which slowly began taking her health. Through these difficult years, she had two wonderful friends and caretakers looking after her and her affairs. Steve and Deb Cronkite always made sure Edyth received the best care and comfort until her end. A truly loving and giving woman, Edyth's beauty and kindness will be remembered forever.

Edyth M. Root, age 87 of Kalamazoo, MI , died November 4, 2005, in Kalamazoo . She was preceded in death by her husband, Gordon Root; two sisters, Vivian and Thelma; brother, Kenneth Tarbell, and niece, Shirley Scarborough. Members of Edyth's family include her nephew, Jim (Sharon) Baker, of St. Simons Island, GA; grandnephew, Joe (Christine) Scarborough , of Schoolcraft; and special friends, Steve and Deb Cronkite, of Kalamazoo .

Learn more about Edyth, view her Life Story film, and visit with her family and friends on Tuesday, November 8, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Betzler Life Story Funeral Home, Stadium Drive (West of US-131). A Celebration of Life service will be held on Wednesday, November 9, at 11:00 a.m. at St. Martin of Tours Church (2010 Nichols Rd) with viewing starting at 10:00 a.m. Food and fellowship will follow the service at the church hall with interment in Prospect Hills Cemetery in Paw Paw. Please visit www.lifestorynet.com where you may archive a favorite memory, order flowers or make a memorial contribution to either Rose Arbor Hospice, Arthritis Foundation or St. Martin of Tours.