



## Lorna May Wendt

February 5, 1915 – April 21, 2015

Lorna May Wendt, 100, of Keystone, died April 21, 2015, at Indian Hills Healthcare Community.

Lorna was born February 5, 1915 on her grandfather's homestead located on the North Platte River. The site is now covered by Lake McConaughy. She was the youngest of three girls born to Charles and Edna (Stansbery) Richards.



Following the death of her father in the 1918 flu epidemic, the family moved to Redlands, Cal. to be near her mother's parents. It was there that she attended kindergarten. After the family returned to Nebraska in 1921, she attended elementary school at District 13, riding horseback 1 1/2 miles, morning and evening, summer and winter, with no weather related school breaks. She attended one year at Chadron Normal School, skipping the seventh grade and making up for the lost year in California.

Lorna graduated from Ogallala High School with the class of 1932. She enjoyed high school where there were new friends, larger classes, sports...and boys. She spent the summers working for money to further her education. She cooked and worked in the hay fields for her uncles, Willard Stansbery, A.O. Patrick and A.B. Berry on their ranches near Lemoyne, Nebr.

Later on, Lorna was staying with her oldest sister, Mrs. Roy Welsh. Roy broke his jaw while cranking the motor on a combine. While he recuperated, the Welsh family moved to Ogallala, leaving Lorna in charge of putting up the alfalfa, a big job even with the help of one man who did the stacking and the chores. The field was finished the day the Welsh family returned. Although Roy offered her half of the next cutting if she would put it up again, she refused. She'd had her fill of hay.

In 1938 Lorna accepted a job with Walter Haythorn in Arthur County to cook for the hay crew. This job lasted five years. Then she lived with the Haythorns in Ogallala and worked for Oscar Peterson at the Ben Franklin Store. Lorna worked there five years, finishing as assistant manager. It was there she met Willard "Bus" Wendt. They were married in 1948, endured the blizzard of 1949, and continued living on the ranch until 1953. They purchased a home in Keystone and Lorna worked for the U.S. Post Office as clerk for several years under Lora McQuay. Bus continued ranch work with the Fred Knight family.

Lorna was a member of the Keystone Extension Club for 22 years, the Keystone Key Club since 1972, and the Keystone Library Club since 1948. She attended Keystone Presbyterian Church and was a member of the Ladies Aid for 17 years, serving as secretary. The Wendts liked to travel and they visited many places in the United States, going coast to coast, and north to south, even getting to Mexico, Canada and Hawaii. Although they were too late for the covered wagons, they traveled by car, bus, train, ship and airplane.

Lorna and Willard were awarded the Aksarben Good Neighbor Award in 1993. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1998. They relocated to Ogallala in recent years.

Her interests included gardening, raising chickens, cooking, building bird houses, writing family history and keeping up with friends and relatives. She had fond memories of riding horses, chasing coyotes with her husband, and putting up hay. The things she didn't like were house work, loud music and gossip.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her husband in 2011, and sisters Letha MacKenzie and Bertha Welsh.

Survivors include her sister-in-law Arta Thiems of Ogallala and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Visitation will be Monday, April 27, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Draucker Funeral Home.

The Funeral Service will be Tuesday, April 28, at 10 a.m. in Draucker Funeral Home with Pastor Roger Wendt of Kearney, officiating.

Interment is in the Ogallala Cemetery. Memorials have been established to the Keystone Library and the Keystone Presbyterian Church.

Online condolences may be sent to [webmaster@drauckerfh.com](mailto:webmaster@drauckerfh.com).

Draucker Funeral Home of Ogallala is in charge of arrangements.