

Obituary

Etha (The Hat Lady) Eversole Justesen Hiatt



Etha was born on April 22, 1914 in Dixon, Wyoming to Elzie Earl Eversole and Emma Louisa Stocks. She was the second child of eight and the first girl in the family. She always looked up to her older brother, Sanford (deceased), who took her on many adventures as they were growing up. As the oldest girl in the family she took care of her younger siblings, Frank (deceased), Lee (deceased), Dale (deceased), Lucille (deceased), Don (Evanston, Wyoming) and Patricia (Mrs. Bill Meehan, Layton, Utah).

In the early 20th century the weekly social event of almost every town was a dance. Everyone went to the dances from the youngest baby to the oldest matron. Etha loved to dance and did not miss one of these dances if she could help it. At one of these social dances she met a handsome young man by the name of Jim Justesen. He courted her and on March 9, 1933 Etha and James Arthur Justesen were married in Baggs, Wyoming.

Since they were married during the Great Depression they made their home with his parents. During that time their first child James (Sonny) Franklin Justesen was born on December 14, 1933. He passed away in 1997.

As the jobs became fewer the little family moved to wherever Jim could get work. Their second child Lodena Kaye was born in Rawlins, Wyoming on August 18, 1935 and Lanny (Larry) Lee was born in Richland, Utah in 1936.

Jim finally got permanent work on the railroad and the family moved to Salt Lake City, Utah where their fourth child Margo Renae was born on April 12, 1941. Jim was transferred to the Blackfoot, Idaho area when Margo was 8.

While helping a neighbor with her garden in 1951 the woman went into labor. Etha said that if it was a girl the woman could give her the baby, which is exactly what happened. Jim and Etha adopted Penny Lucille in the fall of 1951 when she was just day old. However, their joy was short lived when she contacted a mysterious illness and passed away in 1954.

Over the 16 years since Margo was born, Etha endured several miscarriages. The doctors did not hold out much hope when she once again got pregnant in 1956, but on April 11, 1957 she gave birth to a little girl who they named Jullie Ann.

Jewel Marie was adopted in 1962 at the age of 5. She and Jullie became constant companions and instant twins since Jewel was only 6 months older. Etha, Jim and the two girls moved about the country from Montana to California to Ohio to Arizona following Jim's work. But they always kept the family home in Blackfoot.

On January 17, 1971 the biggest tragedy in Etha's life struck when her sweetheart, Jim, passed away from a heart attack. For the next 40 years she would mourn his loss especially on their wedding anniversary, March 9th.

Etha remained single for the next 3 years. During that time she got involved with the adult education program in the Blackfoot Public School system where she taught various crafts. She also organized a weekly dance that was held in one of the school gyms. Little did she know that the band she hired to play for these dances was lead by her future husband, Moran (Mori) Lynn Hiatt. They were married on September 1, 1975.

Etha and Mori danced their way through the next 35 years of life stopping along the way to pick up a baby, SueAnn Lynn, in 1977. Mori proceeded Etha in death by just 71 days.

In 2006 Etha fell and suffered a compression fracture in her back. She was taken to Bingham Memorial Hospital for immediate care then transferred to Bingham Memorial Nursing Home where she spent the remainder of her days. She passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 12, 2011.

She is survived by her brother Don and sister Patty, her son Larry and daughters, Kaye, Margo, Jewel, Jullie, and SueAnn, along with more than 100 grandchildren, great grandchildren, great-great, grandchildren, and great-great-great grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, March 18, 2011 at Blackfoot 1st LDS Ward Chapel. Family will meet with friends and family from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2011 at Hawker Funeral Home, 132 South Shilling Avenue in Blackfoot, and for one hour prior to services at the church. Interment will follow at the Groveland Cemetery. Condolences may be sent to the family at condolences@hawkerfuneralhome.com.