

**NEBRASKA CENTENARIANS AGE 107 OR ABOVE — 2002 TO PRESENT**  
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Updated November 10, 2011

This document offers profiles of Nebraskans who reached age 107 from January 1, 2002 to the present and are deceased. It is a continuation of the author's original manuscript "Nebraska's Centenarians Age 107 or Above — 1867 to 2001" published as a 40-page supplement to the April 24, 2002 *Crete News* and placed on the Nebraska Health Care Association website. It was updated in final form in 2007. Persons are asked to notify the NHCA executive director when Nebraskans become age 107 and when they become deceased at that age or more. The NHCA website address is [www.nehca.org](http://www.nehca.org) and referrals may be mailed to Executive Director, Nebraska Health Care Association, 3900 Northwest 12th Street, Lincoln, NE 68521-3037. The telephone number is (402) 435-3551.

The following profiles are entered in alphabetical order in the appropriate age group, beginning with age 107.

**Nebraska's 107-Year-Olds**

**Celesta Samson Baird Allen**, age 107, was one of five children of James and Ina Ackerman Samson. Born on March 3, 1902 at Albion, Boone County, she died June 12, 2009 at Gering, Scotts Bluff County. Interment was at Valley View Cemetery at Torrington, Goshen County, Wyoming. After living in Boone County until at least 1910, she and her family relocated to a ranch near Torrington.

Upon her marriage to James H. Baird on December 25, 1919, Celesta and her husband resided at nearby Guernsey, where they raised three sons, and James worked for the railroad. After he died in 1975, she moved to Torrington, and in 1990 married Edward Allen. In 2001, the couple moved to Northfield Villa Medical Center at Gering, Nebraska, where Edward died in 2007.

Celesta was a member of the United Methodist Church at Torrington and the Royal Neighbors for 75 years. She enjoyed crossword puzzles, cards, and bingo. For her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2002, she was presented the key to the city of Gering. After death, she was survived by her three sons, brother Leslie Samson, five stepchildren, and many great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, and great great great grandchildren.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Boone County, Roselina Precinct, enumerated on May 14, 1910, where under James C. Samson was listed daughter Celesta as 8 years of age, born in Nebraska. For history, see obituary in June 17, 2009 *Torrington Telegram*.

**Ella Hellwig Bartels**, age 107, was one of eight children of Fred and Lena Reitmeier Hellwig. Born December 14, 1895 at Carroll, Wayne County, she died January 21, 2003 at Laurel, Cedar County. Interment was at Elmwood Cemetery in Carroll. She attended rural school near Carroll, then graduated from Laurel High School. After her marriage to Lester Bartels on February 5, 1920 at Sioux City, Iowa, the couple lived at Parkston, South Dakota for a short time, then relocated to Carroll. In 1925, the couple moved to a farm northwest of Laurel, and raised two daughters.

In 1949, upon retirement of her husband, they moved to live in Laurel. Ten years later, they purchased a service station known as Anderson's Deep Rock, and it was operated by local people. Ella enjoyed crocheting, gardening, and playing Canasta, and was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church. After her husband died in 1990, she continued living at home. At death, her

surviving relatives included two daughters, five grandchildren, five great grand children, and two great great grandchildren.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1900 Nebraska Soundex, Wayne County, Deer Creek Precinct, where listed under Fred Hellwig was daughter Ella, age 4, born December 1895 in Nebraska. For history, see entry on Lester and Ella Bartels in *We Celebrate One Hundred Years 1893-1993* (Laurel, Nebraska Centennial Book Committee, 1992) and obituary in January 30, 2003 *Laurel Advocate*.

**Sophia Ann Becker**, age 107, was one of nine children of Henry and Anna Wolff Becker. Born December 30, 1902 on a farm near Albion, Boone County, she died February 17, 2010 at Albion. Interment was at Trinity Cemetery at Newman Grove.

After attending a nearby rural school, Sophia devoted her life to helping her family, and was known for providing family reunions with original Becker family recipe fritters. She also worked at various jobs, including 19 years of service as a cook at the Boone County Hospital. She remained unmarried. At death, her surviving relatives included 29 nieces and nephews and many of their children.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Boone County, Midland Precinct, enumerated April 21, 1910, where under Henry Becker was listed daughter Sophia, age 7. For history, see article in February 1, 2010 *Norfolk Daily News* and obituary in February 24, 2010 *Albion News*.

**Sarah Stilwell Beckmann**, age 107, was one of nine children of William and Nellie Arnold Stilwell. Born March 2, 1901 on a farm near Unadilla, Otoe County, North Russell Township, Nebraska, she died April 10, 2008 at Burr, Otoe County. Interment was at Hope Lutheran Cemetery near Burr. After attending rural school, she graduated from Unadilla High School, then taught at Burr High School while earning her two-year degree from Peru State College in August 1927.

She married Arnold Beckmann on June 15, 1932 at Unadilla, and resided at Burr, where her husband managed a lumberyard and grain elevator. The couple raised one daughter. She resumed her studies at Peru State in the early 1950s, receiving her bachelor's degree in August 1952. After her husband died in 1955 from lung cancer, even though he did not use tobacco products, she continued her education at Peru State for another three years. She then taught at Cook High School from 1957 to 1966, serving also as principal and school librarian.

Among Sarah's lifelong interests were canning jams and jellies, playing cards, and quilting. She kept a vegetable garden and mowed her own lawn at the Burr home until about age 105. Moreover, after joining on April 18, 1919 the Order of Eastern Star, Palmyra Chapter # 257, she maintained her membership for almost 89 years. According to her nephew John Effken, she was independent-minded, assertive, and read biographies of U.S. Presidents. She also drove her car to Lincoln every Wednesday until about age 105.

At her death, Sarah was survived by daughter Catherine Carlson of Moorhead, Minnesota, two granddaughters, and many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. Her mother Nellie had lived to age 98, her sister Mary to age 98, and her sister Emaline to age 100.

The author verified Sarah's age from the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Otoe County, North Russell Township, where under William and Nellie Stilwell were listed nine children, including Sarah, age 18. The enumeration occurred on January 15, 1920. For history, see obituary in April 17, 2008 *Syracuse Journal-Democrat*.

**Emma Glaser Benck**, age 107, was one of seven children of John and Minnie Schultz Glaser. Born March 4, 1902 at Winside, Wayne County, she died August 9, 2009, at Bloomfield, Knox County. Interment was at Bloomfield City Cemetery. She attended school at nearby Hoskins, and helped her mother at home as well as working at a hotel and restaurant. The family

relocated to Fairfax, Gregory County, South Dakota by 1920, where her father was a railroad worker.

After her marriage to Chris H. Benck at Fairfax, South Dakota on September 8, 1921, the couple resided on farms where Chris worked and they raised their four sons. After 1932, they moved to Persia, Iowa, then in 1936 they relocated to Norfolk, Nebraska, where they operated a small grocery store before moving to Bloomfield. The couple celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1971 before husband Chris died a year later.

Emma was a member of First Trinity Lutheran Church at Bloomfield and also of the VFW Auxiliary. After her death at Bloomfield Good Samaritan Center at Bloomfield, she was survived by her four sons, nine grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1920 U.S. Census for South Dakota, Gregory County, Fairfax, enumerated June 5, 1920, where under John Glaser was listed daughter Emma, age 18, born in Nebraska. For history, see obituary in August 13, 2009 *Bloomfield Monitor*.

**Alta Vernon Duffy**, age 107, was the child of Thomas and Clara Dennis Vernon. Born June 9, 1902 at Sloan, Woodbury County, Iowa, she died November 8, 2009 at Laurel, Cedar County, Nebraska. Interment was at St. Anne's Catholic Cemetery at Dixon. After moving to the Dixon area in 1905, she attended a rural school and Dixon High School through the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in 1919. Then she attended Wayne Normal School at Wayne from January 1920 to May 1921, earning an elementary rural teaching certificate.

At various times in her life, Alta resided with a sister in Boise, Idaho, and worked in California, where she was a maid for a wealthy family, and on one occasion served Herbert Hoover, who was a U.S. President. After her marriage to James Duffy on June 11, 1923 at Omaha, the couple lived on a farm near Laurel, where they raised four children. Alta also taught a rural school between Laurel and Belden in the late 1940s. She enjoyed cooking, baking rolls, and crocheting, and was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church at Laurel and the Altar Society.

After her husband James died in 1965, Alta resided in Laurel, and entered Hillcrest Care Center in 1999. At death, she was survived by her son Don and daughter Teresa Hirschman, two daughters-in-law, 13 grandchildren, 28 great grandchildren, 18 great great grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1930 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Dixon County, Clark Township, enumerated on May 10, 1930 under James Duffy, husband, was listed Alta, wife, age 27. For history, see article in June 9, 2009 *Norfolk Daily News* and obituary in November 12, 2009 *Laurel Advocate*.

**Velma Balcom Farr**, age 107, was one of seven children of Ernest and Anna Ridpath Balcom. Born June 29, 1900 in a sod house near Holbrook, Furnas County, Nebraska, she died June 19, 2008 at Elwood, Gosper County. Interment was at Holbrook Cemetery. She attended a rural school in Frontier County after the age of seven, graduated from Holbrook High School in 1918, then was a teacher for six years. After her marriage to William Farr on March 7, 1928 at McCook, the couple lived on a farm south of Eustis, where they raised three children, and Velma kept a large garden, canned much food, crocheted afghans, and liked to dance at local barn dances.

After the couple moved to Eustis in 1983, Velma worked at the Eustis Senior Center five days a week, and while attending the United Methodist Church, she helped with activities as much as needed. After her husband died in March of 1987, she continued to serve Sunday dinners to her family through Easter of 2006, then was admitted to the Elwood Care Center Assisted Living at the age of 106, and enjoyed listening to Christian music, working the Find-A-Word books, and attending many planned activities at the facility. At her death, she was survived by a daughter, two granddaughters, and a daughter-in-law.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Frontier County, Grant Precinct, enumerated on February 4, 1920, where under Ernest Balcom was listed daughter Velma, age 19, born in Nebraska. Her marriage certificate from Red Willow County dated March 7, 1928 reported her age as 27 and a resident of Cambridge. For history, see obituary in June 26, 2008 *Cozad Tri-City Tribune*.

**Ora Daniels Washington Glass**, at least age 107, was one of five children of Charles and Hattie Daniels. Born in Omaha on May 30, 1895, she spent several years in Omaha, where she attended elementary school. For a time, however, the family lived in Chicago, according to the 1900 Illinois Soundex, then in 1910 she moved to Alhambra, California, later marrying Mr. Washington. By 1928, she returned to Omaha, living at 1916 Cuming Street, according to the *Omaha City Directory*.

She remarried Aaron J. Glass on September 12, 1931 at St. Benedict's Church in Omaha, and the couple raised two sons. After her husband died in 1946, she was the sole support of her family. At her death on January 7, 2003, she was survived by one son, seven grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, and nine great great grandchildren.

Though it was reported that Ora was age 110 at the time of her death, the author found in the 1900 Illinois Soundex under Charles Daniels, Cook County, Chicago, black, age 31 and wife Mattie, age 36, that daughter Ora was listed as born May 1896 in Nebraska. Her sister Nellie was born November 1892 in Arkansas, sister Elsie was born July 1897 in Nebraska, and brother Charles was born October 1899 in Nebraska. Her marriage certificate at the Douglas County Courthouse reveals Ora listed herself as age 36 on September 12, 1931. In an *Omaha World Herald* article on her friend Alma Granny Triplett in 1997, Ora was mentioned as being age 101. More history may be found in her obituary in the January 11, 2003 *Omaha World Herald*

**Josephine Holtorf Jenny**, age 107, was one of nine children of Jurgen and Wiebke Knuth Holtorf. Born October 3, 1896 in Saunders County, she attended the Malmo Schools and graduated from Wahoo High School, then worked as a cashier of the First Trust Company in Lincoln for several years. She was then postmaster of the Malmo Post Office from 1921 to 1967.

Married to Joseph Jenny in Saunders County on October 28, 1925, she supported his many business activities, including a combination barber shop and pool hall, an appliance store, and outdoor movie theater. He was also a member of the Village Board at Malmo for 30 years, several of which he was also Mayor. Josephine was a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, the Saunders County Historical Society, and Dodge County Salon No. 358. There were no children.

According to records housed at the Saunders County Historical Society and Museum, Josephine listed herself as age 29 on her marriage license dated October 28, 1925. At her death on February 13, 2004 in Lincoln, she was survived by one sister and 12 nieces and nephews. Interment was at Union Cemetery at Malmo. For history, see *Saunders County Nebraska History* (1983) and obituary in February 19, 2004 *Wahoo Newspaper*.

**Martha Krueger**, age 107, was one of three children of August and Anna Krueger. Born September 15, 1901 at Winside, Wayne County, she died February 13, 2009 at Wayne. Interment was at Pleasant View Cemetery. She attended elementary school until the sixth grade, then served as a housekeeper for families in the Winside area for many years. She also kept horses for many families, and picked corn by hand as well as milking cows.

She lived at Winside most of her life, and remained unmarried. One of her hobbies was playing bingo. In 1916, she was confirmed in German language services at the Lutheran Church, and became a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. After retiring, she resided at Villa Wayne in Wayne for many years, then moved to Premier Estates in 2004. At death, Martha was survived

by niece Donna Robinson of Edmond, Oklahoma, and special friend Marlene Dahlkoetter of Carroll as well as many other friends.

The author verified her age from a baptism record at her church in Winside dated March 4, 1902. For history, consult in September 6, 2008 *Norfolk Daily News* an article and in the February 16, 20009 issue for her obituary.

**Helen Levy Kulakofsky**, age 107, was one of three children of Saul and Bessie Barnett Levy. Born June 13, 1899 at Leavenworth, Kansas, she died August 9, 2006 at the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home in Omaha. Interment was at the Temple Israel Cemetery in Omaha. At the age of three, she relocated with her family to Omaha, living on North 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, being confirmed at the Park Avenue Synagogue, and attending Omaha Central High School.

She was married at Denver, Colorado in September 1919 to Louis Kulakofsky, who co-owned and operated with his family the famous Central Market near 16<sup>th</sup> and Harney Streets in Omaha for more than 50 years. A co-owner of historical note was his uncle Reuben Kulakofsky, who was credited with the invention of the Reuben sandwich during a poker game with friends at the Blackstone Hotel in the mid-1920s, and the grilled sandwich of corned beef, Swiss cheese, and sauerkraut on Russian rye bread gained fame outside of Omaha via the Fred Harvey restaurants at the railroad stations nationwide.

Meanwhile, Helen was a homemaker, raising their three children: sons Arthur and Leonard and daughter Anna Jane Katelman. Adventurous and independent-minded, she often drove her children across the nation to visit family when automobiles became widely used in the 1920s. Moreover, she learned to participate with her children in such activities as baseball, golf and tennis, and horseback riding. Later, she managed to also visit such places as Alaska, the Caribbean Islands, Israel, and Europe.

Helen was also a community leader, serving the needs of women and children in such organizations as the Red Cross and Planned Parenthood, and helped the USO make sandwiches for World War II veterans. She was past president of the National Council of Jewish Women and in 1945 became the first chairperson of the Women's Division of the Jewish Philanthropies.

After her husband died in October 1968, she continued living at home, keeping herself busy until well into her 90s. Then in 2001 she began residing at the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home. At her death, Helen was survived by her son Leonard, eight grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and one great great granddaughter.

The author verified her age from the 1910 U.S. Census for Douglas County, City of Omaha, Ward 9, Precinct 2, enumerated on April 19-20, 1910, where listed under Saul and Bessie Levy was daughter Helen, age 10, but erroneously recorded as born in Missouri. For history, consult articles in the June 14, 2004 *Omaha World Herald* and Winter 2005 issue of *Traditions: Newsletter for Jewish Senior Services and the Rose Blumkin Jewish Home*. Her obituary appeared in the August 14, 2006 *Omaha World Herald*.

**Marvel Hayden Landercasper**, age 107, was the daughter of Alfred R. and Medora Pierce Hayden. Born June 29, 1899 near Creston, Union County, Iowa, she died February 12, 2007 at Lexington. Interment was at Greenwood Cemetery at Lexington. During her youth, she relocated with her family in 1907 to a farm in Dawson County, Nebraska. After her marriage to Henry H. Landercasper on December 31, 1915 near Lexington, the couple lived on a farm, raising three children.

In 1969, they moved to Lexington, where her husband died in 1974. She continued living at home, maintaining her membership in the Buffalo Grove Presbyterian Church northwest of town and her hobby of crocheting clothing items for children. Then she moved to reside at Park Avenue Estates in Lexington in 1999. At death, she was survived by a son and daughter, nine grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, and 14 great great grandchildren.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Dawson County, Holland Precinct, enumerated January 19-20, 1920, where listed under husband Henry H. Landercasper was wife Marvel, age 20, born in Iowa. For an obituary, see *Lexington Clipper-Herald*, February 14, 2007.

**Ellen R. Larson**, age 107, was the youngest of six children of Nels Peter and Katie Louise Henrikson Larson. Born August 29, 1895 in a sod house near Boelus, Howard County, she attended Boelus School, and lived on the family farm until 1930, when the family moved to town, where Ellen cared for her parents until they died. She was an active member of the Boelus United Methodist Church, taught Sunday School, and was a member of the United Methodist Women. She played the organ, enjoyed cooking and bird watching, and wrote her memoirs at age 87. In December 1999, she moved to the Good Samaritan Center in Ravenna.

The author verified her age from the 1930 Federal Census for Nebraska, dated April 24, 1930, which listed under Robert Larson, age 40, Howard County, Loup Fork Precinct, his sister Ellen R. as age 34, born in Nebraska, and her parents, both age 70, and both born in Sweden. Upon her death on October 1, 2002, she was survived by one nephew, four nieces, and many grand nieces and nephews. Interment was at Westlawn Memorial Park Cemetery in Grand Island. For article and obituary, see *Ravenna News*, September 5, 2001 and October 9, 2002.

**Lula Dunaway Lingenfelter**, age 107, was one of eight children of Allen and Inger Peterson Dunaway. Born December 9, 1900 on a farm northeast of Plainview, North Dry Township, Pierce County, she died October 4, 2008 at Plainview. Interment was at Plainview Cemetery. She attended Rural School Eden Valley, then after the family relocated to Plainview in 1918, she worked for Guthman's Dry Goods until marriage to Newton Lingenfelter on June 24, 1919.

The couple lived on a farm east of town, where her husband was a farmer and cattle feeder, then moved to Plainview in 1936. They raised four children: Virgil, Raymond, Gary, and daughter Jean Crellin. Lula enjoyed cooking, canning, playing cards, and cribbage, and caring for her sister Alta.

After her husband Newt died in 1971, she continued living at home. Two years later, she purchased a red barn for use by the Plainview Historical Society, kept up her knitting, quilting, and crocheting with the As You Are sewing club, and maintained a positive attitude.

An 85-year member of the American Legion Auxiliary, she was also an active member of the Congregational Church, and enjoyed reading. With the assistance of her son Gary, several neighbors, and the Plainview Home Health organization, she resided at home until the final month of her life at Plainview Manor. At death, she was survived by son Gary and daughter Jean, many grandchildren and great grandchildren, two great great grandsons, and several nieces and nephews as well as friends.

The author verified her age by consulting the Pierce County Clerk's Office, which reported Lula listed her age as 18 on June 24, 1919, according to her marriage certificate. For history, see obituary published in October 7, 2008 *Norfolk Daily News*.

**Margaret C. Maser Hermann Davis Maser**, age 107, was one of at least four children of John and Katherine Weigandt Maser. Born March 6, 1896 at Kukkas, a German village in Russia, she and her family emigrated to the United States, settling in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1899 and growing up on Charleston Street in the North Bottoms area with other immigrant families. After her mother died in 1903, her father remarried, and the family was in the care of her stepmother and their grandparents who had also emigrated to America.

Margaret attended school through the 5th grade, and as an adult attended the Lincoln School of Commerce. There was much longevity in her family. Her grandmother lived to age 91 as did her father. Her sister Rose Sitzman lived to age 98, and her sister Emma Mappes, who lost

her hearing at the age of 5 after a bout with diphtheria, lived to age 101. At the time Emma lost her hearing, Margaret began learning not only German and English but also American Sign Language.

Margaret had three marriages, but no children. In 1918, she was married to Joseph Hermann in Lincoln, who died 17 months later. She then worked in the office of Lancaster County Judge Robin Reid, and in 1922 was remarried to James W. Davis, who was a Gage County patrolman and an employee of a bus line from Beatrice to Lincoln. In 1927, Davis became a member of the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, and after being appointed County Sheriff in the summer of 1938, was elected the following November to a four-year term as Sheriff, with Margaret serving as jail matron. Davis died in July 1940 after an illness.

In 1966, Margaret was remarried to John Maser Jr., who had been a childhood friend and distant cousin. During her lifetime, she had been married for a total of 33 years, and between marriages had cared for her father until his death. In her later years, Margaret and sister Emma Mappes lived together in Lincoln, then in 1995 both moved to Village Manor in the northern section of the city, where they were joined for about a year by sister Rose Sitzman. In 2002, Margaret was honored by the Lancaster County Sheriff for her service as a jail matron in the late 1930s. At her death on November 14, 2003, she was survived by a stepson, four nieces and nephews, 11 great nieces and nephews, 17 great great nieces and nephews, and one great great niece. Interment was at Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln.

According to the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Lancaster County, City of Lincoln, under John Maser were listed two sons and four daughters, including Emilie, age 18, and Maggy, age 16, born in Russia, and Rose, age 10, and Emma, age 9, born in Nebraska. Marriage records on microfilm for Lancaster County housed at the Nebraska State Historical Society reveal that Margaret listed herself as age 26 on October 21, 1922, the date of her marriage to James W. Davis. For history, see article and obituary published in May 12, 2002 and November 1, 2003 *Lincoln Star*.

**Edna Kreps McDonald**, age 107, was one of ten children of Alexander and Elmire Staley Kreps. Born on May 1, 1897 near Vesta, Johnson County, she died September 5, 2004 at Pawnee City, with interment at Pawnee City Cemetery. While still a young child, she moved with her family to a farm south of Elk Creek, and attended country school just across the boundary in Pawnee County. And as a young lady she worked for Lincoln Telephone Company at their Tecumseh office.

After her marriage on October 18, 1922 to Frank W. McDonald, who was employed at the *Pawnee Republican* until his retirement in 1948, the couple raised one child, and Edna was a homemaker, though during World War II, she worked for the Lincoln Telephone Company once again. Her husband died in 1952, she continued to live in Pawnee City and was an active member of the Methodist Church and several community organizations. She was also an accomplished cook, a dedicated gardener, and strong supporter of her religious beliefs. According to the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska enumerated April 8th for Johnson County, Todd Creek Precinct, under Allison A. Kreps was listed daughter Edna, age 12, born in Nebraska. At her death, she was survived by her son, three grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and her sister-in-law. For family history, see her husband's obituary in the February 21, 1952 *Pawnee Republican* and her obituary in the September 9, 2004 *Pawnee Republican*.

**Clara Wagner Metzger**, age 107, was one of 13 children of John and Katherine Eisenach Wagner. Born March 23, 1898 near Culbertson, Hitchcock County, she died November 8, 2005 at El Dorado Manor in Trenton. Interment was at Culbertson Cemetery. Her parents were born in Russia, but settled on a farm near Culbertson, where Clara enjoyed horse-back riding, and helped with chores, such as bringing cows from the pasture, taking water to her father in the field, and

working beets. She rode a horse-drawn wagon to attend school in Culbertson through the 11th grade, then became a clerk in the Culbertson Post Office.

She married Lloyd Metzger on February 23, 1927 at Culbertson, and the couple raised two children. Though her husband was postmaster at Culbertson, they lived in the country, where Clara cared for the cows, tended a garden and flowers, and canned meat and vegetables. During the flood of 1935 on the Republican River, their farmstead was destroyed due to high water, but they managed to save the house and have it moved to Culbertson.

After the beginning of World War II, Clara returned to work at the Culbertson Post Office, where her husband remained postmaster until his retirement in 1953. She continued being a seamstress, making clothes for herself and for her grandchildren, and at the age of 90 sewed two 3-piece suits and a quilt. Her husband died in 1968, but Clara lived in their home until 1980 when she moved to an apartment in McCook, living independently until 2001 when she moved to El Dorado Manor at Trenton. She was a member of the Trinity Methodist Church in Culbertson for over 75 years.

The author verified her age from the 1900 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Hitchcock County, where under John Wagner was listed daughter Clarie, age 2, born May 1898 in Nebraska. According to a Delayed Birth Certificate issued September 15, 1954, she was listed as born March 23, 1898, with Baptismal Record as evidence. At her death, Clara was survived by her two children, Marvin Metzger and Thelma Brenning, both of McCook, three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. For an obituary, consult November 10, 2005 *McCook Daily Gazette*.

**Anna Wehmhoff Moehnert**, age 107, was the youngest of six children of John and Lena Lusenhopp Wehmhoff. Born May 6, 1899 at Clay Center, Clay County, Kansas, she died April 21, 2007 at Madison, Madison County, Nebraska. Interment was at Crown Hill Cemetery near Madison. After her family had relocated to a farm near Madison in 1915, she attended school through the 8th grade. And after attending the American School of Osteopathy at Kirksville, Missouri, she returned to Madison to serve as a nurse for her brother-in-law and local osteopath Dr. Charles Hartner from 1920 until her marriage.

Upon marrying Rudolph Paul Moehnert at Battle Creek on October 22, 1927, she and her husband lived on a farm southwest of Madison, and raised two children, George and Marjorie. In 1943, they moved to the town of Madison, where her husband worked as an auto mechanic for Harold Voecks. He then went into partnership with Herman Hartner to establish M & H Oil Company, where he worked for 26 years until retirement in 1975 due to ill health.

While a homemaker, Anna kept gardens of vegetables and flowers, and was an active volunteer with the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the Madison Garden Club. She also bowled on a local league. After her husband died in February 1978, she continued to live in the family home. She enjoyed quilting, tatting, and gardening, and was known to be generous to friends and relatives in many ways.

A lifelong Lutheran and member of Trinity Lutheran Church since 1943, she had an unwavering faith in God, and her favorite Bible verse (also her confirmation verse) was "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of everlasting life." As an osteopathic nurse, she believed in taking vitamins long before they were commonly used, and avoided medications except when essential. After breaking her hip at age 96, she moved to the assisted living facility at Countryside Homes in her community. At her death, surviving relatives included son George of Madison and daughter Marjorie Patzel of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and granddaughters Desiree Bustamante and Denise Patzel, also of Colorado Springs.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1920 U.S. Census for Madison County, Nebraska, where listed on January 20-21 in Madison Precinct, City of Madison under Charles Hartner was Anna S. Wehmhoff, sister-in-law, age 20, born in Kansas. For history, consult Rudy Moehnert's obituary in *Madison Star-Mail* February 23, 1978 and Anna's obituary of May 3, 2007.

**Miriam Croft Moeller**, age 107, was one of three surviving children of John F. and Malvina Ganun Croft. Born September 18, 1900 near Tecumseh, Johnson County, Nebraska, she died November 26, 2007 in Lincoln, Lancaster County. Interment was at Wyuka Cemetery in Lincoln.

Along with her twin sister Irma Jean, who died in Lincoln on September 10, 1978, she graduated from Tecumseh High School in 1918, then attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she earned her bachelor's degree in 1923.

Her father, who was engaged in a mercantile business in Tecumseh and served on the Tecumseh Board of Education from 1899 to 1917, died of a kidney infection at the age of 63, with an obituary published in the October 17, 1925 *Tecumseh Chieftain*. Her mother, who had continued operating the family business until relocating to Lincoln about 1939, died at the age of 102, with an obituary published in the August 17, 1967 *Tecumseh Chieftain*.

Though her twin sister remained unmarried, Miriam was married in Lincoln on June 6, 1932 to Fred Moeller, a businessman in Omaha who became a vice president of the Good Roads Service companies in Lincoln, where he died in 1947. The couple had raised two daughters.

While a homemaker, Miriam maintained memberships in several organizations, including the Heritage Presbyterian Church, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Eastern Star Chapter 271. In her later years, she resided at Gateway Senior Living. At death, she was survived by daughter Lucille Ann Dodd, three grandchildren, seven great grandchildren, and four great great grandchildren.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Johnson County, City of Tecumseh, Ward 3, enumerated May 5-6, 1910, where listed under John F. Croft was daughter Miriam, age 9, and also her twin sister Irma, the same age. For a short obituary, see November 29, 2007 *Lincoln Journal Star*.

**Nell Patterson Stevens**, age 107, was the daughter of John and Ethel Whitman Patterson. Born on June 25, 1903 at Charles City, Floyd County, Iowa, she died January, 23, 2011 at Wood River, Hall County, Nebraska. Interment was at Grand Island City Cemetery. By 1910, the family resided at Holdrege, Phelps County, Nebraska, and by 1920 at Orleans in Harlan County, where Nell graduated from Orleans High School in 1921, then earned a bachelor's degree in education from University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1926.

Upon marriage to Carl Stevens on June 6, 1927 at St. Louis, Missouri, the couple at first resided at Grand Island, and raised three children. Two of her children died during the Republican River flood of 1935, and her husband died in 1986.

During a lengthy career in education, Nell Stevens first taught at Washington High School in Council Bluffs, Iowa and at Sioux City High School in Sioux City. Later she taught in Hall County, Nebraska at Wood River for seven years until 1959 followed by Cairo for eleven years until 1970.

She was a member of the Cairo United Methodist Church, the Nebraska State Education Association, the National PTA, and the Order of the Eastern Star. In retirement, she taught Sunday school for the Cairo United Methodist Church for 25 years, and engaged in her hobbies of crocheting afghans, raising African violets, and playing cards.

After death at Good Samaritan Society Center in Wood River, she was survived by many friends.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Phelps County, City of Holdrege, enumerated April 25, 1910, where under John and Ethel Patterson was listed daughter Nell, age 6. For history, see obituary in January 25, 2011 *Grand Island Independent*.

**Esther McArthur Tupper**, age 107, was the oldest of six children of William and Mary Todd McArthur. Born February 29, 1896 at Dover, Shawnee County, Kansas, she died December 10, 2003 at Hastings. Interment was at Sunset Memorial Gardens. When age two, she and her family moved to Topeka, where she graduated from Topeka High School, and attended Washburn College for two semesters in 1915. After she married Frank Tupper on September 6, 1920, the couple resided in Kansas, and raised two children.

In 1950, they moved to Hastings, where they owned and operated a tailor shop until her husband died in 1964. Esther continued to live at home until 1997 when she moved to an assisted living facility. She kept her car and driver's license until age 102, and was an active member of several groups, including the First Presbyterian Church, the Salvation Army, the YWCA, and Lochland Country Club. Surviving relatives included two sons, three grandchildren, four great grandchildren, and seven nieces and nephews.

According to the 1900 Kansas Soundex, under William McArthur, Shawnee County, Dover Township, she was listed as age 4, born February 1896 in Kansas. Records at the Washburn College Registrar's Office also indicated she was listed as born February 29, 1896. For article and obituary, see February 29, 2000 and December 11, 2003 *Hastings Tribune*.

**Kathryn Becker Vogel**, age 107, was one of six surviving children of Joseph P. and Mary Bogner Becker. Born April 12, 1899 at Howells, Colfax County, Nebraska, she died July 22, 2006 at Dodge, Dodge County. Interment was at SS Peter and Paul Catholic Cemetery in Howells. She attended SS Peter and Paul Catholic School in Howells. After her marriage to Joseph P. Becker on February 20, 1920 at Howells, the couple lived on farms in the Olean and Tabor areas, raising a son and daughter.

In 1952, the family moved to Howells, where her husband died in 1968. Kathryn was an active member of the SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Christian Mothers, and the American Legion Auxiliary. She continued living in Howells until the late 1990s, then at Dodge and Beemer a short time before residing at Parkview Nursing Home in Dodge. At death, she was survived by her son and daughter, eight grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, and one great granddaughter.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Colfax County, Village of Howells, enumerated April 19, 1910, where listed under Joseph Becker was daughter Katie, age 11. For an obituary, see *Dodge Criterion*, July 27, 2006.

## **Nebraska's 108-Year-Olds**

**Julia Beatrice Alverson Brazee**, age 108, was one of four children of Willis W. and Margaret Galon Alverson. Born January 1, 1897 near Whitewright, Texas, she moved with her family to Casey, Iowa in 1911 while her father attended Presbyterian Seminary in Omaha. After he graduated in 1914, the family moved to Tecumseh, where Julia graduated from high school in 1915, then taught at a rural school in Johnson County. In 1918, the family moved to Osceola in Polk County, where she continued her teaching, first at Rural School District 40 for one year, then in the Osceola City Schools through the 1924-25 school year.

After marrying Harry Brazee on August 24, 1924 at Belleville, Kansas, they lived on farms near Osceola for 37 years, raising four children. In 1961 they lived in Osceola, and then moved to Good Samaritan Center in 1980. Julia continued residing there after her husband died in 1984. At her death on June 22, 2005, she was survived by four children, 14 grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren, and 10 great great grandchildren. Interment was at Osceola Cemetery.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1920 Nebraska Soundex under Willis W. Alverson, Polk County, City of Osceola, which listed daughter Beatrice as age 23, born in Texas. For article and obituary, see January 2, 2004 and June 25, 2005 *Lincoln Journal Star*.

**Marie DeMuth Fulkerson**, age 108, was one of four children of Oliver and Sophia Papst DeMuth. Born November 17, 1900 on a farm near Juniata, Adams County, Nebraska, she died on January 6, 2009 at her home in St. Joseph, Missouri. Interment was at Memorial Park Cemetery in St. Joseph. At the age of one, she relocated with her family to North Dakota, returning to the Hastings area a year later, then moved to Toulon, Illinois in 1905, returning again to Hastings in 1909, where she attended Dominican Sisters Academy and then took two courses at Hastings College in 1914. After 1918, she moved to live in St. Joseph with uncle and aunt Andrew and Magdalena DeMuth.

She married Lyman Fulkerson on May 21, 1932, and had no children. They both worked at the local family business DeMuth Supply Company in St. Joseph until the death of Andrew in 1949, when Lyman and Marie became sole owners of the business until it was sold in 1972 after being in the family for 91 years. After husband Lyman died in 1973, Marie continued to live at home. Among her various activities was membership of the St. Joseph Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, where she was a Regent from 1959 to 1962 and Executive Board member from 1984 to 1986. She was also one of the reorganizers of the Altrusa Club of St. Joseph in 1936. Marie donated a sum of \$500,000 to Missouri Western State University in 1999 for a community center which was dedicated in 2005 and named the Fulkerson Center, even though there were several other large donors.

At her death, Marie was a member of the second oldest mother-child combination in Nebraska history, behind the Mary P. Romero Zielke Cota and Rosabell Zielke Champion Fenstermaker combination. Her mother Sophia died in 1977 at the age of 111. Additionally, her father Oliver died in 1965 at the age of 101, her sister Jennie at age 75, brother Joseph at age 96, and sister Emma at age 97. Marie was survived by nieces and nephews, including Jerry DeMuth of Ayr, Nebraska

The author verified her age from 1910 U.S. Census for Adams County, Precinct 1, Ward 3, City of Hastings, enumerated on April 18, 1910, where under Oliver and Sophia DeMuth was listed daughter Marie, age 9. For history, consult articles in March 25, 2005 and May 14, 2007 *St. Joseph News-Press* and November 21, 2007 *Hastings Tribune* and December 26, 2007 *Blue Hill Leader*. A brief obituary appeared in the January 7, 2009 *St. Joseph News-Press*.

**Anna Aden Hofeling**, age 108, one of three children of John and Frances Agena Aden. Born April 6, 1895 at Sterling, Johnson County, she died on July 26, 2003 at the Wymore Good Samaritan Center in Wymore, Gage County. Interment was at Blue Springs Cemetery. After living at Sterling a few years, she spent much of her childhood in Oklahoma, returning to live in Gage County at the age of 18. She married Edward W. Hofeling on March 3, 1918 at Zion Lutheran Church near Pickrell, and they raised six children.

After her husband died in 1965, she moved from the Barneston area to Wymore, and pursued her hobbies of crocheting, flower gardening, canning, traveling, and fishing with her family. She was a member of the Do Good Club as a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church south of Wymore and St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Wymore. In 1990 she moved to Wymore Good Samaritan Center.

The author verified her age in the 1900 Nebraska Soundex, Johnson County, City of Sterling, where under John G. Aden was listed daughter Anna M., age 5, born April 1895 in Nebraska. At death, she was survived by a son and three daughters, 25 grandchildren, 62 great grandchildren, 38 great great grandchildren, and one great great great grandchild. For an obituary, consult July 30, 2003 *Wymore Arbor State*.

**Carol Gordon Johnson**, age 108, was one of two children of George and Grace Gillespie Gordon. Born January 5, 1903 on a farm near Essex, Page County, Iowa, she died June 29, 2011 at Fremont, Nebraska. Interment was at Memorial Cemetery in Fremont. During her

formative years, she graduated from Shenandoah High School in Shenandoah, where she later married Merle A. Johnson on September 26, 1926.

The couple then settled in Omaha, and Merle worked for Brodkey's Jewelry until 1941, when they moved to Fremont, where they opened Brodkey's Jewelry and Carol worked part-time while raising their two sons. After her husband died in 1976, she worked part-time for Anderson Jewelry in Fremont.

She enjoyed being a homemaker, and was known for her fried chicken and baked pies. Carol also maintained a large flower garden and grew vegetables. Aside from quilting, crocheting, and making crafts, she also enjoyed traveling, and was a member of a garden club, the First Baptist Church and its Hannah Circle, and Arbor Vitae Chapter 29 Order of Eastern Star. In her later years, she resided at Nye Legacy Health Center at Fremont.

At her death, she was survived by daughters-in-law Shirley Johnson of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Caralee Johnson of Fremont, four grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, son David in December 2008, and son G. Dean Johnson in November 2009.

Her age was verified in the 2910 U.S. Census for Iowa, Fremont County, Walnut Township, enumerated February 28, 1920; under George and Grace Gordon was listed daughter Carol as age 17. For history, consult article in January 4, 2011 *Fremont [NE] Tribune* and obituary published June 30, 2011.

**Herman Kopke**, age 108, was born May 5, 1895 at Fahren, Germany. In March 1912, he emigrated to the United States, and soon lived with his uncle August Kopke on a farm near Bennington, Nebraska, where he learned to speak the English language. In 1923, he moved to Omaha to work at the Armour Packing House until 1946, then he rented a farm near 156th and Pacific Streets.

He married Ella Schmidt on September 24, 1924 at Council Bluffs, Iowa, and the couple raised one daughter. After his wife died in 1948, he resided on the farm with his daughter and her husband. After his daughter's death in 1990, he continued living on the farm until 1993, then resided with his granddaughter near Manilla, Iowa until entering the Good Shepherd Lutheran Home in Blair in 2000.

According to his U.S. Certificate of Naturalization # 2492950, Petition Volume 78, Number 8544 dated May 19, 1927, Herman listed himself as 32 years of age. He liked playing cards and dancing, and enjoyed dancing with his granddaughter on his 100th birthday. At his death on April 7, 2004, he was survived by a son-in-law, a granddaughter, four great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. Interment was at Prospect Hill Cemetery in Omaha.

For history, consult articles in *Blair Pilot-Tribune*, May 13, 2003 and April 13, 2004 and obituary in *Omaha World Herald*, April 15, 2004.

**Vivian Quinn Nichols**, age 108, was one of six children of William and Luna Dunkel Quinn. Born July 29, 1900 on a farm near Elmwood, Cass County, she died on July 24, 2009 at her home in Lincoln. Interment was at Lincoln Memorial Park. After attending a nearby country school, she graduated from Elmwood High School in 1917, then taught at a country school until entering the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1921, where she majored in physical education, played field hockey, and was a swimmer. In 1922, she once flew in an airplane with famed aviator Charles A. Lindberg Jr., who learned to fly in Lincoln before he became known as the first American to make a transatlantic solo airplane flight from New York to Paris in 1927.

Upon earning her bachelor's degree from UNL in 1925, she taught at Lead, South Dakota, then married Maynard Nichols on April 4, 1927 at Plattsmouth. The couple had two children. Her husband was a civil engineer with the State of Nebraska, then with the Burlington Railroad line west of Chicago. Upon returning to Lincoln in 1930, he worked with the

Department of Roads and Aeronautics. During World War II, he served in China, helping construction of airfields for B-29 planes. After the war, he worked on construction of Veterans Administration hospitals throughout the Midwest.

During her husband's relocation to various jobs, Vivian taught school, including kindergarten at Topeka, Kansas, where she also received her master's degree from Washburn University. She was also a district advisor for the National Girl Scout Council at Danville, Illinois. The family enjoyed traveling in a motor home, then returned to live in Lincoln, where her husband died in 1972, and Vivian suffered a heart attack.

She continued living in the home originally purchased by a grandfather before 1900. Vivian was a member of the First-Plymouth Congregational Church, the Temple Chapter of Eastern Star, and the UNL Alumni Association. After her death, she was survived by son Roger and daughter Marilyn Scott, four grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and seven great great grandchildren.

The author verified her age from the 1920 Nebraska Soundex, Cass County, enumerated in February 1920. Under William J. Quinn was listed daughter Vivian, age 19, born in Nebraska. For history, consult articles in November 19, 2006 *Lincoln Journal Star* and September 18, 2007 *UNL Daily Nebraskan*. An obituary appeared in the June 26, 2009 *Lincoln Journal Star*.

**Clara J. Nosal**, age 108, was one of seven children of Jacob and Anna Kurtz Nosal. Born July 13, 1900 at Tarnov, Platte County, she died March 9, 2009 at Omaha. Interment was at St. John's Cemetery at Bellevue, Nebraska.

After residing in Platte County until at least 1920, she relocated to Omaha by the 1930s, and later to Council Bluffs, Iowa. Clara remained unmarried. At death, she was survived by nieces.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Platte County, Burrow Township, enumerated January 1920, where under Jacob Nosal was listed daughter Clara as 19 years of age, born in Nebraska. According to the 1930 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Douglas County, City of Omaha, enumerated on April 5, 1930, under Edward and Margaret Smith was listed Clara Nosal, servant, at 29 years of age. For history, see brief obituary in March 11, 2009 *Council Bluffs Daily Nonpareil*.

**Helen Suhr Peters**, age 108, was one of three children of Henry and Anna Munderloh Suhr. Born August 14, 1899 on a farm southwest of Oakland, Burt County, Nebraska, she died August 11, 2008 at Scribner, Dodge County. Interment was at Scribner Cemetery. At the age of 4, she and her family moved to Uehling, she attended a nearby rural parochial school, then graduated from Uehling High School in 1914. Afterwards, she worked at a local merchandise store, continued playing the organ at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and accompanied Chautauqua shows that came to Uehling as well as Christmas programs and other events.

After her marriage to Harry J. Peters on March 12, 1924 at Uehling, she helped her husband on the farm west of Scribner, raised three children, and was an accomplished seamstress. In 1954, they moved to Scribner, where she was a member of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church and its ladies aid. She also belonged to an extension club and several card clubs. In 1982, her and husband and son died.

By 1999, she resided at Scribner Good Samaritan Center, and often stated, "The good Lord has blessed me with a long and healthy life. He has given me a wonderful family, a sense of humor, and a love of music. He has also provided me with a roof over my head, a place to sleep and food to eat. I have everything I need and no work!" At her death, she was survived by daughters Joyce Frischie of Scribner and Janet Heimann of Raymore, Missouri, daughter-in-law Carolyn Peters of West Point, four grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren, four great great grandchildren, step great grandchildren, step great great grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1900 Nebraska Soundex, where under Henry Suhr in Burt County, Kerl Precinct, was listed daughter Helena, age 10/12, born August 1899 in Nebraska. For article, see *Scribner Good Samaritan Center Newsletter*, Fall 1999 and obituary in *Fremont Tribune*, August 13, 2008.

**Sadie Baltimore Reed**, age 108, was the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. William Baltimore. Born February 1, 1896 at Lorman, Mississippi, she attended the Lorman Public Schools through the ninth grade, then was married on January 12, 1915 to Daniel Reed. The couple raised ten children, and moved to Omaha in 1942, where she was a homemaker except for a time as seamstress during World War II at the Martin Bomber Plant. Her husband died in 1957. For years, she served as a stewardess at St. John A.M.E. Church and lived with a daughter until moving to Life Care Center in Omaha when she reached age 106.

According to the 1900 Mississippi Soundex, under William Baltimore, Jefferson County, was listed daughter Sadie, age 4, born 1896. In the 1920 Mississippi Soundex, under Dan Reed, Jefferson County, was listed wife Sadie, age 23. Previously in the 1910 Mississippi Soundex, under William Baltimore she was listed as age 14. At her death in Omaha on June 16, 2004, she was survived by two brothers, two sons, and two daughters, 39 grandchildren, 78 great-grandchildren, 54 great great grandchildren, and one great great great grandchild. For an article and obituary, see *Omaha World Herald*, January 31, 2003 and June 26, 2004.

**Emma Elsie Ottemann Schardt**, age 108, was one of five children of Friedrich and Maria Mangels Ottemann. Born July 16, 1899 near Byron, Thayer County, she died March 12, 2008 at Hebron. Interment was at Peace Lutheran Cemetery at Deshler. After her mother died when Elsie was only two weeks old, she grew up at the nearby farm home of her grandparents, and attended Rural School District 75.

She married Fred Schardt on August 29, 1920 at St. Peters Lutheran Church at Byron, and lived on a farm northwest of Byron. She and her husband raised five children: Egbert, Loretta, Wilma, Florence, and Gladys. They moved to Deshler in 1949, where Elsie belonged to the Peace Lutheran Church, and pursued her hobby of sewing blankets for Lutheran World Relief and crocheting afghans.

After her husband died on January 19, 1994, she lived at home until three years later when she entered Parkview Haven Nursing Home in Deshler. At her death, she was survived by her five children, 13 grandchildren, 30 great grandchildren, 16 great great grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends.

According to the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Thayer County, Byron Precinct, enumerated on April 22, 1910, under Claus Mangels was listed granddaughter Elsie, age 10, born in Nebraska. For her history, see articles in October 25, 2006 *Deshler Rustler* and July 22, 2007 *Omaha Sunday World Herald*. An obituary was in the March 19, 2008 *Deshler Rustler*.

**Merle N. Shafer**, age 108, was one of four children of Levi and Georgia Gobel Shafer. Born December 24 1896 in Superior, he was raised after his father died in 1904 by uncle and aunt Tom and Lottie Marr on their farm near Ruskin, where he completed the eighth grade in a rural school, and acquired the nickname "Shorty". He began farming on his own in the late 1920s, and used horse-drawn equipment until purchasing his first tractor in 1946. He also worked on road construction on Highway 4 east of Marshall in the 1930s, making less than \$5 per day, and at the Naval Ammunition Depot at Hastings during World War II.

He married Elsie Melvin on May 19, 1929, and they were married for over 72 years until she died in December 2001. The couple raised four children, were members of the United Brethren Church, and liked polka dancing. In 1952, they left the farm and moved to Edgar, where Merle was a school custodian until retirement in 1974. They resided at Rosebrook Care Center in Edgar after March 1996.

His age was verified in the 1900 Nebraska Soundex under Levi Shafer, Nuckolls County, Beaver Precinct, City of Superior, which reported Merle was born in December 1896 in Nebraska. At his death on May 23, 2005, he was survived by three daughters, eight grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. Interment was at Edgar Cemetery. For history, consult Sutton *Clay County News*, December 25, 2003 and obituary in *Hastings Tribune*, May 24, 2005.

**Louise Gabler Shane**, age 108, was one of four children of Rudolph and Louisa Kyriess Gabler. Born April 3, 1896 at Columbus, she lived with her family there and at Pierce and Bloomfield, where she graduated from high school in 1915. Both of her parents were immigrants from Germany, and her father held doctor of pharmacy and veterinary degrees. Her mother had died in 1909, then Louise helped her father with bookkeeping, and after teaching rural school for one year, she worked at the local railroad depot as a secretary and ticket agent.

After she married railroad engineer Leonard Shane on December 5, 1922 at Wayne, the couple resided at Bloomfield. There were no children. Her husband died in 1957, but she continued to live at home until 1994 when she moved to Good Samaritan Center in Bloomfield. She was a life-long member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church and belonged to the Order of Eastern Star for 79 years.

Her age was reported as 14 in the obituary of her mother published in the December 24, 1909 *Bloomfield Journal* and she understated her age as 25 on her December 5, 1922 marriage license housed at the Wayne County Clerk's Office. At her death on November 13, 2004, she was survived by five grand nieces and nephews and several great grand nieces and nephews. Interment was at Bloomfield Cemetery. For her history, consult April 14, 1998 *Yankton /SD/ Daily Press & Dakotan* and April 17, 2003 *Bloomfield Monitor*. An obituary appeared in the November 18, 2004 *Bloomfield Monitor*.

**Alta Blough Swanson**, age 108, was one of six children of Franklin and Melissa Thompson Blough. Born February 21, 1896 at Harlan, Shelby County, Iowa, she died November 8, 2004 at Lincoln, Nebraska. When a young child, she moved with her family to Loretto in Boone County, Nebraska and graduated from Albion High School in 1913. Then she attended Wayne State College for one year, and Nebraska Wesleyan from 1914 to 1916, earning her teaching certificate.

She and her husband Arthur B. Swanson lived in Lincoln, where she was a teacher and longtime member of Trinity United Methodist Church. There were no children. An aunt lived to age 108, and Alta resided at Eastmont Towers during her later years. At her death, surviving relatives included nieces and nephews.

According to the 1900 Nebraska Soundex, under Franklin Blough, Boone County, Dublin Precinct, Alta was listed as age 4, born February 1896 in Iowa. See brief obituary in November 10, 2004 *Lincoln Journal Star*.

**Gertrude Iva Babcock Switzer**, age 108, was one of four children of Ben and Grace Miller Babcock. Born November 9, 1896 near Clearwater, Antelope County, she died June 14, 2005 at the Neligh Nursing Center in Neligh. Interment was at the Clearwater Cemetery. After receiving her education in the Clearwater Public Schools, Iva obtained her teaching certificate and taught for several years in rural schools.

After her marriage on August 1, 1921 to Amos M. Switzer at Neligh, the couple raised three children while living in Clearwater, where her husband owned and operated a produce business until his death in 1964. As a member of the United Methodist Church, Iva was active in the church offices, and served as its pianist and organist for many years. She was also a charter member of the American Auxiliary Unit in Clearwater. She continued living at home until 1997 when she moved to the Neligh Nursing Center.

Marriage records on microfilm for Antelope County housed at the Nebraska State Historical Society reveal that Iva listed herself as age 24 on August 21, 1921, the date of her marriage to Amos M. Switzer, thus verifying her age. At her death, she was survived by five grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild. For an obituary, see the June 22, 2005 *Neligh News and Leader*.

**Viola Atwood Willson**, age 108, was one of four children of Franklin and Clara Leonard Atwood. Born July 25, 1899 on a farm south of Lebanon, Smith County, Kansas, she died May 11, 2008 at Hebron, Thayer County, Nebraska. Interment was in Chester Cemetery at Chester, Nebraska. After attending local rural schools and employment in Lebanon, she was married to Robert Willson on February 12, 1923 at Lebanon. The couple lived on a farm in Kansas, raised four children, moved to Missouri in the 1930s, then returned to Kansas, and finally settled in Chester, where Viola was an active member of the Christian Church, worked hard, and made quilts.

After her husband died in 1994, she continued to live at home until the age of 104 when she relocated to the Blue Valley Lutheran Home at Hebron. At her death, she was survived by four children, nine grandchildren, ten great grandchildren, and seven great great grandchildren.

The author verified her age by examining a copy of her marriage license of February 12, 1923 on file at the Smith County Courthouse at Smith Center, Kansas, in which she listed her age as 23. For history, see articles in the July 31, 2002 and July 28, 2004 *Hebron Journal-Register* and the July 22, 2007 *Omaha Sunday World Herald*. An obituary was published in the May 14, 2008 *Hebron Journal-Register*.

### **Nebraska's 109-Year Olds**

**Wilma Janike Clark**, age 109, was one of four children of William and Fannie Skoda Janike. Born September 18, 1899 on a farm near Rising City, Butler County, Nebraska, she died on November 27, 2008 at Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska. Her cremated remains were placed in the family plot at Circle Mount Cemetery in Rising City. After attending Rural School District 30 for eight years, she attended Rising City High School, where she graduated in 1917. She then attended Lincoln School of Commerce for two years, and became married to Roe Clark. There were no children.

After working as a secretary for Western Brick & Supply Company in Lincoln, she relocated to Denver, Colorado by 1930, and was a secretary for the Colorado Department of Game and Fish until retirement in 1964. Then she lived with her mother in Rising City, where she worked for a time at J.C. Penney Store in nearby David City and took a position at a bank in Rising City.

About 1970, Wilma moved to Lincoln, remaining active by volunteer service at Bryan Memorial Hospital and continuing her hobbies of playing bridge, bowling and being with family and friends. Previously, she had enjoyed traveling and fishing. She was also a member of the First Lutheran Church at Rising City and in Denver, and belonged to Eastern Star Lodge.

In 1991, she lived at Brentwood Estates in Lincoln, then moved to Holmes Lake Manor in 2003. Honest and hard working her entire life, she was in good health. At her death, she was survived by her 103-year-old sister Grace Janike, four nieces, two nephews, and several great nieces and nephews.

The author verified Wilma's age by consulting the 1900 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Summit Township, Butler County, enumerated on June 14, 1900, which listed her as born in September 1899.

For history, consult *Butler County, Nebraska History* (Butler County Historical Society, 1982) and article in *Lincoln Journal Star*, February 21, 2008 and obituary of December 8, 2008.

**Leona Adams Gleed**, age 109, was one of 11 children of Edward and Sarah McMillin Adams. Born along with twin brother Leo on March 28, 1900 near Page in Holt County, Leona died February 7, 2010 at Norfolk. Interment was at Chambers Cemetery. Her father had founded in 1901 the Chambers State Bank at Chambers, which he operated until his death in 1941. Her mother, who was born at Bennet in Lancaster County but had moved at the age of 10 to Holt County, died in 1964 at 90 years of age.

Leona's twin brother Leo Adams, who died March 16, 1990 at the age of 89, was a banker at the communities of Chambers, St. Paul, and Atkinson for a total of 51 years, and he celebrated 65 years of marriage to Thelma F. Dyke, with two children dying at a young age and two others still living.

After Leona attended the Chambers Public Schools and graduated from O'Neill High School in 1918, she attended the Nebraska School of Business in Lincoln, followed by work at her father's bank in Chambers. After her marriage to local rancher Lloyd Gleed on February 14, 1926 at Dakota City, Nebraska, the couple resided on their ranch west of Chambers, where they farmed and raised three daughters.

Her husband died in 1963 after undergoing surgery at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, so she studied library science courses at Nebraska Wesleyan University from 1964 to 1966. Then she returned to Holt County to live at O'Neill until August 1992 when she moved to reside at The Meadows in Norfolk, and during the final year of her life at Heritage of Bel Air.

One of Leona's hobbies was the collection of soil samples from many locations in the United States, Canada, and other nations. And she was engaged in library work in schools, churches, and The Meadows. In Holt County, she was a leader of 4-H Clubs, and a member of the Valley Center County Extension Club for 60 years.

When Leona celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in the year 2000, she was honored at the Norfolk Holiday Inn with family members from 13 states in attendance, including daughters Celesta Cooke of Norfolk, Armetta Prill of Tulsa Oklahoma, and Dorine Covault of Des Moines, Iowa. After lunch, the residents of The Meadows were joined by the faculty and pupils of the Westside Grade School for launching of 100 red balloons to note Leona's special occasion.

In June 2008, she was honored at The Meadows for being the oldest in age in Rebekah Lodge and for her 85 years of membership, confirmed by Lodge officials as the longest membership in the organization worldwide. She also belonged to the United Methodist Church for more than 90 years.

During newspaper interviews during her later years, Leona reported that her many years of experiences had made her appreciate "the freedoms we have and the mechanical things," and she counted as her favorite memory "growing up with my twin brother. We never missed celebrating our birthdays together." As for general wisdom, she advised, "Don't miss anything. Make every minute count, keep up doing your activities, that is a good way to get old."

At her death, Leona was survived by sister Etha Walters of Grand Island, three daughters, 14 grandchildren, 30 great grandchildren, and 31 great great grandchildren. She also ranked as the oldest twin in Nebraska history, and according to Dr. L. Stephen Coles, Director of Gerontology Research Group based in Los Angeles, she was the sixth oldest twin in world history.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1900 Nebraska Soundex for Holt County, Verdigris Township, and under Edward Adams and wife Sarah were listed son Leo and daughter Leona, both born in March 1900 in Nebraska. For history, consult feature articles in the July 2008 *Nebraska Cornhusker Odd Fellow* and the March 27, 2009 *Norfolk Daily News* and *Omaha World Herald* and an obituary in the February 9, 2010 *Norfolk Daily News*.

**Mabel Holman Holliday**, age 109, was one of two children of William and Sarah Armstrong Holman. Born May 6, 1901 on a farm northeast of Auburn, Nemaha County, she died May 21, 2010 at Auburn. Interment was at Sheridan Cemetery. After attending a nearby rural

school through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Mabel attended Antioch School and Auburn High School, where she graduated in 1919. Then she earned a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1924, and was a charter member of Sigma Kappa Sorority.

After marriage to Ray W. Holliday on June 25, 1926 at Auburn, the couple moved within a year to Hebron, where they owned a drug store, and raised two children--son Ray, Jr. and daughter Patricia Gibbons. After her husband's death in 1956, Mabel remained in Hebron until 1961, when she returned to Auburn.

While living independently at Auburn, and driving her car until age 100, she was a member of the First United Methodist Church, and was active in United Methodist Women, serving on many committees. She was also a member of PEO Chapter DB and the Order of the Eastern Star. Her hobbies included sewing, maintaining scrapbooks, devoting time to grandchildren, and playing bridge and dominoes.

At the age of 103, Mabel moved to Longs Creek Assisted Living, then when almost age 109 to Nemaha County Good Samaritan Center in Auburn. At her death, she was survived by her son and daughter and their spouses, seven grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and other relatives.

The author verified her age from the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Nemaha County, Douglas Precinct, enumerated on April 18, 1910, where under William and Sarah Holman were listed two children, including Mabel, age 8. And in the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Nemaha County, Douglas Precinct, City of Auburn, enumerated in January 1920, Mabel Holman was listed as age 18.

For history, consult articles in the June 27, 2007 *Hebron Journal-Register* and the May 6, 2010 *Nemaha County Herald*, and obituaries in the May 23, 2010 *Lincoln Journal Star* and May 24 *Omaha World Herald*.

**Rose Koch Portwood**, age 109, was one of five children of Frank and Magdalena Hellman Koch. Born March 5, 1902 on a farm near Morrowville, Washington County, Kansas, she died on November 2, 2011 at Fairbury, Jefferson County, Nebraska. Her cremated remains were placed at a location chosen by the family. She attended nearby Albia Rural School through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, with an interruption of two years while living in Utah.

She married Joe Portwood on January 11, 1922 at Clifton, Kansas, and resided at Reynolds and Gladstone, Nebraska, and later in Momence Township southwest of Geneva in Fillmore County, where her husband was a teacher. They raised two children, and enjoyed dancing. In the 1930s, they moved to Fairbury, where Joe served as Jefferson County Treasurer until his death in 1957.

Rose continued living in her Fairbury home, and began working at Swanson's, and later helped her son and grandson at the Harbine Tavern and when they operated Café 77 in Beatrice. Later, she washed dishes at several restaurants until retiring in her mid-90s when she also stopped driving a car. In January 2004, she and her daughter moved to Cedarwood Apartments to live beside each other, then after March 2007 she resided at Gardenside Long Term Care Center.

At her death, she was survived by grandsons Chuck Bauer and Kem Portwood and their wives, daughter-in-law Dorothy Portwood, four great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild. Her father had lived to age 85 and her mother until almost age 100.

The author verified Rose's age by consulting the 1920 U.S. Census for Kansas, Lowe Township, Washington County, enumerated on February 2, 1920, where under Frank Koch and wife Magdelene were listed five children, including daughter Rosie, age 17.

For history, consult articles in March 5, 2008 *Fairbury Journal-News* and March 6, 2010 *Beatrice Daily Sun* and obituary in November 4, 2011 *Beatrice Daily Sun*.

**Martha Rojewski Costello Schafer**, age 109, was one of eight children of Barney and Bridget Krajewski Rojewski. Born September 29, 1899 in St. Paul, Howard County, Nebraska,

she died November 25, 2008 at Cheyenne, Laramie County, Wyoming. Interment was at Olivet Cemetery in Cheyenne. When Martha was four years of age, the family moved to Loup City, Sherman County, where her father was a section foreman with the Union Pacific Railroad. Martha attended school in Loup City, and resided there until at least 1920.

After relocating to Los Angeles, California, she trained about three years at St. Vincent DePaul School of Nursing, then was a nurse at its hospital where among the celebrities she met was actress Clara Bow. She also worked at a sanitarium, and married Mr. Costello, though death or divorce occurred, the relatives are not sure. Meanwhile, Martha returned to Loup City, where on July 15, 1930 she married her second husband Edward D. Schafer.

The couple settled in Cheyenne, where Edward worked for the railroad, and two sons were born--Edward Jr. and John. During World War II, Martha donated blood to the Red Cross, and taught home nursing at St. Mary's High School for a few years. Then she continued to do volunteer work for both the school and the Red Cross.

After her husband Edward died on May 7, 1963, she continued living in their home until well into her 90s, then moved to Pointe Frontier Retirement Community, where she kept busy doing leg bends on the hallway stairs, riding in her wheelchair, and saying a prayer every day. At her death, Martha was survived by son Edward, 12 grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren, and three great great grandchildren.

The author verified Martha's age from the 1900 Nebraska Soundex, Howard County, City of St. Paul, where she was listed as born in Nebraska in September 1899, and in the 1920 Nebraska Soundex, Sherman County, Loup City, she was listed as age 20 during the early part of the year. On her marriage certificate housed at the Sherman County Courthouse at Loup City, she listed herself as age 31.

For history, consult articles in *Cheyenne Wyoming Tribune-Eagle*, January 3, 1993 and September 29, 2007 and obituary of November 27, 2008.

### **Nebraska's Supercentenarians**

**Mable Mae Hoag Kelling**, age 110, was one of four children of Willis and Artemesia Brown Hoag. Born November 4, 1900 in a sod house at Jaqua, Cheyenne County, Kansas, she died November 30, 2010 at Lincoln, Nebraska. Interment was at Cedar Cemetery at Cedar, Kansas. At the age of three, she moved with her family by covered wagon to Kirwin in Phillips County, where she graduated from high school. Then after attending Hays College at Hays, Kansas, she taught at rural schools for five terms and one term at Kerwin.

After marriage to Harvey Kelling at Cedar, Kansas on July 11, 1923, she resided on a nearby farm, where three children were born: Ruth, Elaine, and Keith. They eventually resided at Los Angeles, California for one year, then returned to their farm at the beginning of World War II. Upon retirement in 1970, they moved to Phillipsburg, where her husband died in 1985. But Mable continued living there until age 106 when she moved to reside at Independence House at 5500 South Coddington Avenue at Lincoln, Nebraska.

Mable taught Sunday school for many years, sang in a quartet for funerals, and was active in several clubs, including the Solomon Valley 4-H Club and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Among many awards, she received first place in Federated Ladies Club competition, the highest award from the WCTU, and Old Settlers Day queen at Kirwin in 2001. She was also an American Red Cross Gray Lady, and gave readings on a Phillipsburg telethon for many years.

At her death, Mable was survived by daughters Ruth Lanier and Elaine Bertrand as well as their husbands, seven grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren, and many other relatives as well as friends.

The author verified her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Kansas, Phillips County, Kerwin Township, where on April 21 under Willis Hoag was listed daughter Mae at age

9. And according to the 1920 U.S. Census for Kansas, City of Kirwin, enumerated on January 12 under Willis Hoag was listed daughter Mae at age 19. Also verified was her birthday from an August 29, 1941 birth certificate from the Division of Vital Statistics, State of Kansas. For history, consult death notice in *Lincoln Journal Star*, December 2, 2010 and obituary in the Smith Center, Kansas *Smith County Pioneer*, December 9, 2010.

**Reuel S. Millar**, age 110, was one of five children of Archie and Emma Clark Millar. Born March 1, 1897 on a farm north of North Bend in Dodge County, Nebraska, he died April 15, 2007 at Lakewood, Colorado. Interment was at Fairmont Cemetery in Denver. He attended a rural one-room school, then graduated from North Bend High School in 1916. As a young man, he farmed with his family, then later managed a trucking operation that delivered cattle to Omaha.

After his marriage to Bernice Sollar Rodaway on June 7, 1926 at Council Bluffs, Iowa (according to a family Bible), he lived at Fremont, where he worked for Safeway Grocery Store, and took care of two stepchildren—Ruth Ellen Nett and Keith Rodaway. Later, he and Bernice had one son—Richard, who did not marry.

When it was believed that his wife had tuberculosis, the family moved to the Denver, Colorado area, hoping the climate would help her condition. Reuel managed Safeway Grocery Stores, and after relocation to Anaconda, Montana, he managed a grocery store, then worked at a copper smelter.

In 1962, he and his family returned to Denver, where he managed King Super Grocery Store until his retirement in 1965. After over 50 years of marriage, his wife died, and he continued to live in the same home, along with his son Richard. In 1997, during his 100th birthday celebration, he was featured on local television and honored by the Governor of Colorado.

He subscribed to his hometown newspaper, and was able to drive his car until age 108. Though a leg condition necessitated his using a wheelchair at the end of his life, the only medication taken was aspirin. In a March 2, 2007 *Denver Post* article, he attributed his long life to hard work and perseverance, and stated: "I was always young at life, and I never gave up." In a profile that took the entire front page of the March 14, 2007 *North Bend Eagle*, he revealed his pride in his father Archie, who was the second Caucasian male child born in Dodge County history.

At his death, Reuel was survived by his son Richard, and four step-children: Anne, Tim, James, and Nancy Nett. According to Gerontology Research Group based at Los Angeles, he ranked as the third oldest living American man and sixth oldest living man in the world at the time.

The author verified his age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Dodge County, Cottrell Township, North Bend, where on April 21-22 under Archie Millar was listed son Reuel, age 13, born in Nebraska. And according to the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Dodge County, Cottrell Township enumerated on January 12-13-16 was listed under Archie Millar son Reuel, age 22, born in Nebraska. For history, consult article in *North Bend Eagle*, March 14, 2007 and obituary in *Omaha World Herald*, April 23, 2007.

**Abeline Wrage Spiels**, age 110, was one of eight children of Wilhelm and Anne Arp Wrage. Born September 4, 1898 on a farm southwest of Grand Island in Hall County, Nebraska, she died November 24, 2008 in Grand Island. Interment was at Grand Island Cemetery. She attended Rural School District 4, and lived on the family farm, helping with various chores.

After marriage to Ferdinand W. Spiels on January 24, 1923 at Hastings, she lived on their farm near Doniphan for two years, then moved to a farm six miles east of Cairo. The couple raised three sons: Robert, Lloyd and Phil. Despite the death of her husband Nance on October 19, 1939, she remained on the farm until 1942 when she moved with her sons to Grand Island.

Abby then worked at the Butter Krust Bakery until retirement in 1963. In the community, she belonged to St. Pauls Lutheran Church, the Platt-Duetsche Ladies Society, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Ladies Auxiliary Post 1347. She never drove a car and always walked to work and elsewhere. An outgoing person, she also enjoyed card clubs, weekly bingo nights and music, especially polkas. When she reached age 100, the local VFW Auxiliary named her an Honorary Gold Star Mother, and helped her celebrate each subsequent birthday.

She continued to live in her home until age 105 when an injury due to a fall led her to reside at Tiffany Square Care Center, where she maintained a positive attitude and good health despite loss of eyesight. At her death, she was survived by her son Phil, six grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren. According to Gerontology Research Group based in Los Angeles, she ranked among the 80 oldest living persons in the world at the time, and among the 920 longest-lived persons in world history.

The author verified Abby's age from a baptism record dated June 18, 1899, which listed her as being born September 4, 1898 in Hall County, Nebraska. In the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Alda Township, Hall County, enumerated on April 22, 1910, she was listed as age 11, and in the 1920 Nebraska Soundex, Hall County, enumerated in January 1920, she was listed as age 21.

For history, consult *Omaha World Herald* article of September 3, 2008 and *Grand Island Independent* articles of August 29, 2007 and September 5, 2008 and obituary of November 26, 2008.

**Julia Huigens Tharnish**, age 110, was one of eight children of John and Mary Fitzler Huigens. Born June 6, 1897 on a farm 16 miles northwest of Creighton, Knox County, Nebraska, she died December 14, 2007 at Creighton. Interment was at St. Ludger Cemetery in Creighton. She attended a nearby rural one-room school until age eight when the family moved to town, where she attended St. Ludger's Academy, then graduated from St. Ludger's High School in 1914. She worked as a clerk in local stores, played piano for the Lyric Theater, and for the Creighton City Band, where she met her future husband who played both trumpet and violin. The couple also played in her brother's dance band called "The Ed Huigens Orchestra."

After her marriage to Ernest Tharnish on May 21, 1918, the couple lived on a farm south of Creighton in Antelope County. Her husband was scheduled to enter the military service during World War I, but was excused from the responsibility when it ended on November 11th, the day before he had been ordered to report. Meanwhile, Julia was pregnant with their first of 14 children, and had contracted Spanish flu during the famous epidemic that had claimed the lives of more than 500,000 people worldwide, but her child was born in March 1919 and survived despite being frail.

In 1954, after moving to live in Creighton, she and her husband sold Raleigh Products for 13 years, traveling throughout Knox County. Then they sold the Products from their home after her husband became ill. He died on May 15, 1983, just six days before their 65th wedding anniversary.

Julia was a member of the St. Ludger Catholic Church, and belonged to Royal Neighbors, Helping Hand Club, Alter Society, and Catholic Daughters of America. She enjoyed crocheting and tatting, and developed her writing talent through letters, short stories, and her autobiography, which she completed for her family shortly before her 100th birthday. And she continued playing the piano until beyond age 100.

Longevity was present in her family, as her parents lived until their late 80s, and two sisters and a brother until their late 90s. She lived at her home until age 97 when she moved to live in the Bruce Park Apartments, then at age 101 resided at the Creighton Care Center.

At her death, she was survived by 12 children, 76 grandchildren, about 165 great grandchildren, and more than 60 great great grandchildren. According to Gerontology Research Group based in Los Angeles, she ranked among the 70 oldest living persons in the world at the

time, and among the 750 longest-lived persons in world history. She also was among the world's supercentenarians who raised the most children.

The author verified Julia's age by consulting the 1900 Nebraska Soundex for Knox County, Logan Township, where under John Huigens she was listed as being born in June 1897 in Nebraska. In the 1910 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Creighton Township, Knox County, City of Creighton, enumerated on April 20, 1910, she was listed as age 12, and in the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, Antelope County, Bazile Township enumerated on February 25-26, 1920, under Ernest Tharnish was listed wife Julia as age 22.

For history, consult *Omaha World Herald* article of June 4, 2006 and obituary of December 15, 2007 and *Norfolk Daily News* articles of June 5, 1997 and June 4, 2007 and obituary of December 15, 2007.

**Mattie Fern Laflin Fentiman**, age 110, was one of three children of Albert and Elizabeth Gamble Laflin. Born August 30, 1900 on a farm near Elmwood, Cass County, Nebraska, she died August 18, 2011 at Rock Port, Missouri. Interment was at Elmwood Cemetery at Elmwood.

After Fern attended school at Elmwood, she was married to Clifton Fentiman on March 5, 1919, then lived on their farm near Unadilla in Otoe County until 1931, when they moved to Fortescue, Holt County, Missouri area. The couple raised one son named Dwane. In 1945, they moved to Rock Port in Atchison County, where her husband died on March 19, 1969.

Fern was a member of the United Methodist Church at Rock Port as well as the United Methodist Church Women Society, a 66-year member of Ralph Greer American Legion Auxiliary Unit #49, and 8/40 Salon 816. She was also a former member of the Rock Port Chapter # 440, Order of the Eastern Star, and Rock Port Garden Club.

For many years, she had volunteered as a Gray Lady with the American Red Cross, and enjoyed working many hours in her flower garden. And she attributed her good health to staying active and doing positive things for others. She was honored on the occasion of her 107<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2007 by a resolution of the Missouri House of Representatives, Ninety-fourth General Assembly. And she was honored for her life and achievements with a proclamation in August 2010 by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Rock Port.

At her death, Fern was survived by daughter-in-law Helen Fentiman, grandsons Richard and James Fentiman and their wives, all of Rock Port, great grandson Barry Fentiman and great great granddaughter Madison Fentiman of Olathe, Kansas as well as many nieces, nephews and friends. According to Gerontology Research Group based in Los Angeles, she ranked among the 75 oldest living persons in the world at the time.

The author verified Fern's age from the 1920 U.S. Census for Nebraska, North Russell Township, Otoe County, enumerated in January 1920, where she was listed as age 19, and in the 1930 U.S. Census for Nebraska, North Russell Township, Otoe County, she was listed as age 29. There was also a delayed birth certificate filed with the Division of Health, State of Missouri at Jefferson City on April 6, 1956. For history, see obituary in *Fairfax/MO/Forum*, August 25, 2011.

**Mollye Saltzman Marcus**, age 111, was one of five children of Herschel and Rachel Pearlmutter Saltzman. Born October 18, 1899 at Lechovitch, Russia, she died February 18, 2011 at Woodland Hills, California. Interment was at Eden Memorial Park at Mission Hills. At the age of four, Mollye emigrated to the United States, arriving on the SS Blucher of the Hamburg America line on August 21, 1904, then settled at Council Bluffs, Iowa, where her father was owner of a coal business, and she attended Abraham Lincoln High School.

After marriage to Abner Marcus on November 18, 1923 at Council Bluffs, she and her husband raised two daughters Beverly Bramson and Darlene Hirschinger. In 1931, the family

moved to Auburn, Nebraska, where they had a clothing store named Marcus Clothing, and Mollye was active in all aspects of the business.

Upon Abner's retirement in 1950, the couple relocated to Omaha, where Mollye was a member of the Beth El Synagogue and was a sales volunteer in the Hadassah Thrift Store. After her husband died in 1964, she continued residence in Omaha until moving to the suburbs of Los Angeles in 1990 to be near relatives. At age 102, she moved to Woodland Hills Retirement Hotel.

She enjoyed cooking, baking, and playing cards as well as reading the morning newspaper. And she liked stories that had happy endings by her favorite author Danielle Steele. Favorite television programs were "Wheel of Fortune" and awards shows that featured Hollywood glamour. Dedicated to her family, Mollye was always present for a birth, birthday, wedding, anniversary, Bar and Bat Mitzvah, graduation, etc. And during her latter years, Mollye and her family agreed to participate in UCLA and Stanford Universities scientific study that investigates the longevity gene.

At her death, Mollye was survived by daughter Darlene Hirschinger and son-in-law Bob Bramson, six grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren. She was the 51<sup>st</sup> oldest living person in the world, according to Gerontology Research Group based in Los Angeles.

The author helped verify her age by consulting the 1910 U.S. Census for Iowa, City of Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie County, Kane Township, Ward 2, enumerated on April 20, 1910, where under H. Saltzman was listed daughter Mollye as age 10. Researchers with Gerontology Research Group obtained additional records to validate her age. For history, consult obituary in *Los Angeles Times*, February 20, 2011, p. A-45.

**Ella Winkelmann Schuler**, age 113, was one of six children of Claus Heinrich and Maria Siercks Winkelmann. Born September 5, 1897 on a farm in Fontanelle Township, Washington County, Nebraska, she died May 7, 2011 at Topeka, Kansas. Interment was at Mt. Hope Cemetery in Topeka. Her childhood was spent mostly working on the family farm, though she did attend public school from time to time. After the family moved to Hooper in Dodge County in 1917, she attended a business school at nearby Fremont for two years, and worked at a store for two years.

After her marriage to John C. Schuler on August 19, 1923 at Hooper, the couple moved to a town north of Denver, Colorado, where her husband worked for a railroad, then about 1925 moved to Page City, Thomas County, Kansas. In 1934, the family with its three sons moved to Topeka, where the couple owned and managed a grocery store until 1978. Ella attended Topeka High School when she was over 50 years of age, then took classes at Washburn College for two years.

Ella's youngest son James died in 1952 at age 24 from a ruptured appendix. Her husband died in March 1983 after nearly 60 years of marriage. Ella attended the Lutheran Church, and belonged to Rebecca Lodge and the Topeka Women's Club. She liked to travel, and rode in a camper on a pickup truck to visit Washington, Arizona, and Michigan, and also traveled to Europe and spent some winters in South America. During her later years, she walked wherever she could, and enjoyed reading.

At age 99, she fell on an icy sidewalk, and after recovery in a hospital for a broken hip, she entered an independent living facility owned by the United Methodist Church, followed by Aldersgate Village in Topeka. At her death, she was survived by son Robert Schuler, six grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. According to Gerontology Research Group based in Los Angeles, she ranked as the second oldest living American and the 7<sup>th</sup> oldest living person worldwide, among more than 80 supercentenarians at the time.

The author helped verify Ella's age by consulting the 1900 Nebraska Soundex for Washington County, Fontanelle Township, where under Henry Winkelmann and wife Mary was

listed four children, including daughter Ella, born in September 1897 in Nebraska. Gerontology Research Group also used documents from her cousin Ann Andersen.

For history, consult articles in August 31, 2007 *Topeka Capital-Journal* and January 4, 2011 *Fremont /NE/ Tribune* and obituary in May 10, 2011 *Topeka Capital-Journal*.