



Dorothy M. Sanborn

January 17, 1926 - April 23, 2019

Dorothy Sanborn was a teacher, a farm wife, and a mother--roles she embraced and that gave shape to her life.

After graduating from Anita High School, Dorothy attended Normal Training to become a teacher in country schools where she was responsible for education, janitorial duties, and maintaining the fire. Dorothy found her true calling in life. She was happiest when she was teaching. At a time when not many women attended college, Dorothy put herself through UNI and earned a B.A. in Education. She taught for a few years before taking a 9-year hiatus, during which she mothered her children, Stephen and Debra. She returned to the classroom in 1966, and continued teaching until retirement at the age of 80. Her students remember her as their favorite teacher who insisted on their best efforts but with a loving style. One student remembers never hearing her raise her voice in the classroom. She had a fondness for the kids who came from rough homes and for those who struggled with learning. When her husband died in a farming accident in 1980, Dorothy said, "Those kids saved me. I had to put a smile on my face and go to work every day." An important aspect of her life as an educator was her membership in Delta Kappa Gamma, a professional society for women educators, which offered her opportunities to attend national conventions with fellow teachers.

Dorothy was also an educator outside of the classroom, as a 4H leader and

Sunday school teacher for 40 years. ----- Dorothy married Virgil Sanborn in 1950. The couple built a life of love on the farm, where they would walk beanfields in the evening, holding hands, and Virgil would lift Dorothy over the fences. Virgil restored old cars and one of their favorite activities was driving around and going for ice cream in the old Buick or Studebaker. Dorothy and Virgil had the best of marriages. He had a special way of teasing her out of a sour mood. She always laughed about his tattoo that he got in the Navy. It was of her nickname "Dot." She laughed about he would have done if he'd married Rosie instead. They met in church youth group, dated for 8 years and she finally agreed to marry him. She always used to say it was the best decision of her life.

Dorothy was both a hard worker and a lady of self-respect. When she was 70, she fell off a ladder while painting the hog house and broke her ankle in three places. She pulled herself 200 yards, over the gravel driveway to the house. But before calling 911, she called the even older neighbor lady to help her clean up.

A huge garden was central to Dorothy's summers on the farm. She preserved and canned peaches, green beans, plums, pears, tomatoes and froze corn and carrots. Dorothy was proud of her small grocery bill, since she raised so much of the family's food herself. ----- Dorothy's thriftiness and the sacrifices she made were to offer her children opportunities she had not had herself. For example, she wore the same brown coat with the fur collar for years while making sure her children had music lessons, FFA and 4-H camps. She used her teaching income to pay for her children's college educations as well as church camps and international travel. In return, she expected her children to excel: an A- wasn't good enough for Dorothy. Dorothy liked nice things. She would save and save to get a quality item instead of wearing a bargain. And she always paid in cash.

Dorothy's greatest joys were her grandchildren Stephanie, BJ and Chris. She wouldn't miss a band, chorus or play performance. She encouraged and supported them in everything they enjoyed. She especially loved overseeing 4-H projects and baking with them. A wiener roast in the grove was their reward after picking up sticks. She made sure each one got to attend Grandparent/Grandchild Church camp with her. The grandchildren also each spent a week on the farm during the summer where they enjoyed board games, cards and croquet. Spending time with family and friends, County Fair judging, and church filled Dorothy's heart with joy. Her huge smile reflected that joy to those who surrounded her, and who will miss her dearly.

Dorothy at the age of age 93, died on Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at the Elk Ridge Assisted Living in Elkhorn. She was preceded in death by: her parents; husband, Virgil Sanborn; son, Stephen Sanborn; and a sister, Darlene Reints. Dorothy is survived by: her daughter, Deb (Bill) Eidam of Elkhorn; grandchildren, Stephanie (Brad) Plouzek of Bennington, NE, Will Eidam of Oklahoma City, OK, Christopher Eidam of Millard, NE; and great grandchildren, Scarlett, Micah and Samuel Plouzek, and Brody Eidam; Nieces, Diane Jungman and Renee Asp; nephews, Greg and Vance Reints.

Memorials can be made to either the Dexter United Methodist Church or to the Dorothy Sanborn Scholarship Fund and can be mailed to the Reichmuth Funeral Home at 21901 West Maple Road - Elkhorn, NE 68022 who is caring for Dorothy and her family at this time.

Cemetery Details

Dexter Cemetery

Dexter, IA

Previous Events

Family will receive friends

APR **26**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Dexter United Methodist Church
707 Warren Street
Dexter, IA

Funeral Service

APR **27**. 10:30 AM (CT)

Dexter United Methodist Church
707 Warren Street
Dexter, IA

Tribute Wall



“ Dorothy M. Sanborn

December 10, 2022 at 09:12 AM



“ Dorothy was my 6th grade home room teacher. I will never forget those desks that lifted with a big lid and her laugh and that twinkle in her eye. She was a great inspiration to me. Dorothy and Virgil were great neighbors and my folks thought the world of them both.
-Dennis Atherton

Dennis Atherton - April 30, 2019 at 10:10 PM



“ She always found the time to help a child with ADHD!! Thank you for the teacher you were. RIP ❤️❤️

Donola Saxton - April 27, 2019 at 05:16 PM



“ If you were ever the recipient of a cake with 7 minute frosting from this wonderful lady you know what I'm talking about. Blessed to have received 3 precious cakes after the birth of each of my children. Wonderful Lady, Terrific Neighbor, Exceptional Baker - Better than Martha's I'm 100% sure. <https://www.marthastewart.com/344305/seven-minute-frosting>

Diana Weesner - April 25, 2019 at 02:34 PM

YF

“ *Your FarmHouse Family purchased the Loving Grace for the family of Dorothy M. Sanborn.*



Your FarmHouse Family - April 25, 2019 at 01:51 PM

KF

“ *Mrs. Sanborn was my 5th grade homeroom teacher. I can remember spending a lot of time learning Iowa history. Mrs. Sanborn and Mrs. Coulter were our 4-H leaders for 8+ years, when it was all girls, the Union Farmerettes. Not many of us lived on a farm but we had many sewing, cooking and home improvement projects that kept us busy. We had the special honor of them attending my wedding, 12 years ago. I remember the wedding started just a little late while we waited for them to arrive. I will cherish the good memories.*

*Karen Farley
(one of the Meddock Twins)*

Karen Farley - April 25, 2019 at 12:44 PM

RD

“ *I had the honor of teaching with Dorothy from 1979-1982. She was a true inspiration as a teacher and dear friend. Dorothy was a "class act," always dressing stylishly in her Laura Ashley dresses! She lived life with a quick smile and contagious giggle. I'll never forget being there when she received the news of her beloved husband's death. Of course she was devastated, but she soon accepted it with the strength of her deep faith.*

Rochelle Drew - April 25, 2019 at 11:53 AM

LS

“ Lisa and Dan Sheller purchased the Days of Sunshine Bouquet for the family of Dorothy M. Sanborn.



Lisa and Dan Sheller - April 24, 2019 at 10:37 PM

KS

“ ❤️ My amazing 5th grade teacher! Mrs. Sanborn inspired me to be a teacher and furthered my love of Social Studies and history! What a wonderful educational legacy she has given to her many students. My sympathies to the Sanborn Family.
(Kayla Cummings)

Kayla Sierks - April 24, 2019 at 07:20 PM

TF

“ The Florida Families purchased the Ringed by Love for the family of Dorothy M. Sanborn.



The Florida Families - April 24, 2019 at 05:28 PM

 Jamie Knight

“ I'm so very sorry for your family's loss. Mrs. Sanborn was my favorite and most influential teacher. She was kind and lifted me up. She was the teacher that gave me confidence in myself when I didn't have it. I am forever grateful for her kind heart, her smile and her hugs! ❤️❤️❤️❤️

Jamie Knight - April 24, 2019 at 05:07 PM



“ I remember Dorothy not only as a teacher but also as the mother of a classmate, Steve Sanborn. I can still see her radiant smile and hear her laugh. She was very active at our church, the Methodist church in Dexter, as well as being very involved in various other community organizations and events. She was a wonderful lady and a great teacher. RIP Dorothy and say hi to Steve for me.

Karen (Wells) Irwin

Karen Irwin - April 24, 2019 at 10:01 AM

LF

“ My brother and I both had her as a teacher. We always got a kick out of her looking for her glasses that were on her head. 😂 Loved her! She was a very special lady.

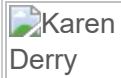
Lori (Patten) Fox - April 24, 2019 at 09:47 AM

RS

“ Deb and family,
I'm sorry for your loss. I got to know Dorothy, when I started teaching at the Dexfield School.back in 93. I taught preschool and she taught 5th grade. She asked me to join Nu Alpha Gamma and I did.in 1999. Dorothy stood up with me when I joined. She was a mentor to me in the organization and also as a teacher. The year I was president I dedicated our program book to her. I can still hear her laugh. I'll always remember her for this saying, " Don't wish your life away." When I was having a bad day I would say that I wished the day was over and she would come back and say her saying to me. Now that I have gotten older I realize what she was saying. She was a GREAT lady, and friend.
May she be at peace.

Roxy Schwartz

Roxy Schwartz - April 23, 2019 at 11:00 PM



“ *Ino my greatest memory of her and I'm sure many other students was her loosing her glasses all the time and they would be on her head I think she was just seeing if we was paying attention lol I remember going out and mom would till her garden for her in the spring she had such a nice garden and she was a great lady I will sure miss her*

Karen Derry - April 23, 2019 at 08:55 PM

SP

Not an act, my whole life she could never find her glasses :) thanks for sharing!

Stephanie Plouzek - April 24, 2019 at 09:36 PM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dorothy M. Sanborn.*



April 23, 2019 at 08:48 PM

MN

“ *I taught with Dorothy at Dexter in 1997-until she retired. She was a caring teacher and good friend. She made me a better teacher. Rest in Peace my friend.*

Merry Lee Pierce Novak - April 23, 2019 at 08:41 PM

CT

“ Dorothy was a dear family friend. My Mom considered her a very special friend. I remember her smile and bubbly, happy attitude. RIP Sweet lady.

Chuck Thompson - April 23, 2019 at 07:49 PM

JS

“ Our sympathies at the loss of a lovely and dedicated lady and educator!! What a wonderful life you are celebrating! Please know our prayers and thoughts are with you all. Ken and Jeani Shepherd

Jeani Shepherd - April 23, 2019 at 07:36 PM

MV

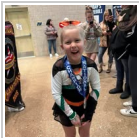
“ Not only was Dorothy a dedicated, caring teacher, she was active in the community, church, 4-H and a good friend to her neighbors and co-workers in the school system.

Mona Vellinga - April 23, 2019 at 06:56 PM

T(

“ Dorothy was a fabulous teacher. Had a way of getting kids excited about learning! She was my favorite. Terri Beaman Thompson

Terri Beaman (Thompson) - April 23, 2019 at 06:51 PM



“ Dorothy was one of the elderly teachers that taught students to respect teachers. Dexfield might have thought that we had teachers who were not able to teach kids in our generations, but i respected her very much.



Stacy Garrett - April 23, 2019 at 06:05 PM