

Lydia Nussbaum Burke
(August 31, 1909 - August 1, 2010)

Lydia Nussbaum Burke, 100, passed away Sunday, August 1 at Swiss Village in Berne. Lydia was a life-long Berne resident, having been born a mile northeast of Berne, in Monroe Township, Adams County, Indiana on August 31, 1909 to John and Mary Ellen (Baumgartner) Nussbaum. Lydia was the fourteenth of fifteen children and the last surviving member of the John Nussbaum family.



From her youth, Lydia learned to work hard, doing farm chores, cooking, gardening and sewing. The Nussbaum family was known for its singing and would often gather on the front porch of their home, harmonizing with beautiful hymns. Lydia attended No. 8 Sprunger School on the corner of the family farm until fourth grade. Her father, John Nussbaum, was killed in a tragic horse-drawn vehicle accident north of Berne on September 29, 1910. Following his death, Lydia moved with her widowed mother to a home on north Jefferson Street, continuing her education in the town of Berne. Lydia's mother, Mary Ellen Nussbaum, died on December 25, 1950.

Lydia and her family were faithful members of First Mennonite Church in Berne, where she was baptized on June 15, 1924. Lydia participated in various singing groups and for many years, sang with the church's Chancel Choir and in countless presentations of oratorios with the Mennonite Choral Society. She was a Godly example to her family and all who knew her.

While a teenager, Lydia worked at the old City Lunch, cooking and baking pies. Later, she was employed at the Winner House as a seamstress. From the Jefferson Street home, Lydia moved with her mother to a new house on Center Street. While living there, Frank Burke resided nearby with his sister Lillian and brother-in-law, Oswald Liechty. Being close neighbors and in the same church, a friendship developed. Frank and Lydia were married on September 13, 1931 at the First Mennonite Church Parsonage by the pastor, Dr. C.H. Suckau.

Frank and Lydia lived in Berne their entire marriage. Lydia enjoyed gardening, quilting and raising beautiful roses. Though a busy mother, Lydia worked in her home on Compromise Street as a seamstress, doing alterations and custom sewing. For many years, Lydia made drapes for Habegger Furniture, including the large drapery projects for the new wing of First Mennonite Church and for Swiss Village's beginning.

A highlight of their marriage was a trip to Switzerland in 1976, celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary. In 1988, Frank and Lydia moved to a ranch home on Poplar

Avenue. They had enjoyed sixty-three years of marriage when Frank died following surgery, on January 28, 1995. Lydia sold their home and moved to an apartment at Swiss Village, where she continued her hobby of quilting. She was an avid quilter and reader, until her eyesight dimmed. As her grandchildren married, Lydia presented each with a quilt she had lovingly hand stitched.

Frank and Lydia became parents of five children. Surviving her are children, Rev. John (Shirley) Burke of Westminster, CO; Tom (Rita) Burke of Fishers, IN; Jerry (Betty) Burke of Berne; Judy (Dr. Richard) Yoder of Berne and Mary (Bob) Ransbottom of Rockford, Ohio. There are fourteen grandchildren: granddaughters Pamela Abbuehl; Jill McClusky, Bonnie Garcia, Renata Jackson, Michele LeFever, Holly Miller and Heidi Miller and grandsons: Matt Burke, Jonathan Burke, Rev. Craig Yoder, Michael Burke, Jason Yoder, Peter Burke and Lance Yoder. There are thirty-six great grandchildren, age newborn to twenty one years of age.

Preceding Lydia in death were her parents, John and Mary Ellen Nussbaum, her husband, Frank Burke, her sisters, Cora Nussbaum, Meta Stucky, Elda Reynolds and Edna Ellenberger, her brothers, Frank, Wesley, Fred, Edwin, Wilbur B., Ben, Albert, Victor, Rev. John V. and Hiram Nussbaum. Lydia was also preceded by one great grandchild, Elliana Miller.

Calling will be Wednesday, August 4 from 2:00 to 8:00 pm in the auditorium of Swiss Village and one hour preceding the funeral at First Mennonite Church. The funeral service will be Thursday at 10:30am in the Church's Chapel. Officiating is her son, Rev. John P. Burke, and grandson, Rev. Craig Yoder and assisted by Rev. Jerry Flueckiger. Burial will follow the funeral service in the M.R.E. Cemetery west of Berne.

Suggested memorials are to Swiss Village Endowment and Family Hospice of Northeastern Indiana.

Yager-Kirchhofer Funeral Home online obit (accessed 5/10/2013)