

Margaret (Kitson) Hilyard Gifford, 94 of Decatur passed away at Adams Memorial Hospital on Sunday, September 16, 2007.

Margaret was the only child of Harvey Franklin and Mary Frances Elzey Kitson, and was born in Decatur on February 3, 1913. She worked at the E.F.Gass store before graduating from Decatur High School in 1931, and later at the Kohne Drug Store next door. While studying nursing at Wesley Memorial Hospital in Chicago, she became quite ill and returned to Decatur to re-cuperate, during which time she re-united with Vaughn Lowell Hilyard, and the couple eloped on August 7, 1933. They were the parents of two daughters, Barbara Jo (Herbert) Krueckeberg and Gwendolyn Sue (Richard C.) Mies, both are currently living in the Decatur area.

She was a legacy member of the local chapter of Tri Kappa, and served in numerous office positions, including that of President in the early 1940's. Both daughters also become members of Tri Kappa. She was baptized as a young girl into the Methodist faith, and later joined the Baptist church during her marriage to Mr. Hilyard. She is also well known in this area for having crocheted more than 600 lap robes and quilts, all of which were given to area hospitals, nursing homes and other charities. For many years, she was also a nurse's aid and volunteer at the local hospital and she anonymously did many charitable acts for the local Boys and Girls club as well as Habitat for Humanity and other organizations.

For more than 25 years, Margaret was a salesperson and then an executive buyer for the Wolf & Dessauer stores, from which she retired in 1975, at which time Vaughn and Margaret moved to Fort Meyers, Florida, where Vaughn died in 1980. She later married Nelson Silsby Gifford, who was from the Fort Wayne area, but living in Florida. The coupled traveled a great deal, until his death in 1992. She then moved back to Decatur in the fall of 2000, and shortly thereafter lost her eye-sight due to mascular degeneration and became an avid listener to the video books from the library and the Indianapolis League of the blind, until she could no longer hear.

Surviving besides the two daughters, are Barbara's children, Stephania Jo (Charles) Cook, Brian Keith (Marilyn Rumschlag) Andrews, and Thomas (Lisa Garner) Krueckeberg, all of Decatur; David Lowell (Julie Jackson Johnson) Andrews of Anchorage, Alaska; and Fredrick Alan (Kristin Nuetzel) Krueckeberg of Toledo, Ohio. The Mies grandchildren include Jennifer Jo (Phillip) Temple of Indianapolis; Michael Kevin (Monica Jones) Mies of Waxhaw, N. Carolina; Gregory Vaughn (Jane Leakey) Mies of Decatur, and Eric Richard Mies currently of Chicago. Great-grandchildren are Christopher Cook, Kyle (Rachael Canterbury) Andrews, Katie Krueckeberg, and Matthews and Daniel Krueckeberg, as well as Tyler Kimmel, Ashley Kimmel, Brittney (Mies) Such, Jazmen Mies, Jesica Mies, Zachory Mies, and Alex Mies, and her first great-great grandchild Xavier Gene Richard Hindenlang. Also surviving are a step-son, Robert (Mary Ann Weidmeier) Gifford of St. Joe, Michigan, and their three children, Sara (Steven) Rentz; Thomas (Jody) Gifford, and Amy (James)

Hume. Her four step great grandchildren include Benjamin, Elizabeth and Anna Rentz, and Parker Hume.

The first great grandchild, Nicholas Wayne Andrews died in 1979, and son-in-law Herb Krueckeberg passed away in 2006.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by Haggard & Sefton Funeral Home, with a Memorial service to be held at the Zion United Church of Christ located at Third & Jackson streets on Thursday, September 27, 2007 at 11:00 a.m. Visitation with family will be one hour prior to services.

The Rev. Randy Rossman will officiate at the service. Memorials are to A.C.C.F. Margaret Kitson Hilyard Memorial Fund or Habitat for Humanity.

Haggard-Sefton & Hirschy Funeral Home online obits (accessed 9/20/11)