



## Mary Ada Parks

January 4, 1920 - November 10, 2017

Mary Ada Pope Parks, age 97, passed away quietly at 11:21AM on Friday, November 10, 2017 at Southeast Hospital in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. A few days earlier it had been determined she had heart and kidney problems. Mary Ada was born on January 4, 1920 to Jeanette Austin and Hugh Kennedy Pope in Yorkville, Illinois.

She grew up on the family farm which raised cattle, sheep, and hogs. Her father's Red Polled cattle herd was well known at the national level. Farm life was always special to her. As a farm girl, 4-H was part of her life and she gained an early appreciation of sewing. Throughout her teen years her annual 4-H project was to make a dress. This training led to her Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics Education at the University of Illinois. While attending U of I, she met Walter D. Parks at the Wesley Foundation. They became engaged as Walter entered the Army in 1942. Walt's first furlough was delayed until December, 1944. Upon returning to the United States on December 24, 1944, he phoned Mary Ada and said it's time to get married. One week later, on January 1, 1945, they were married. Walt returned to the war for another 6 months. During the war years Mary Ada taught high school home economics at Normal and Ashton, Illinois. After the war, they lived in Galesburg, Moweaqua, and Effingham, before moving to Anna in 1955.

Upon arrival in Anna word got out that Mary Ada taught Home Economics.

Dongola High School was in need of a teacher, and although not looking for a job at that time, she agreed to go back to teaching. She taught in Dongola for two years, then transferred to Anna-Jonesboro CHS in 1957. Mary Ada loved teaching and she received a Master's degree from Southern Illinois University. After 32 years of teaching, both she and Walt retired from their jobs in 1984 and spent the next 25 years traveling and enjoying the fruits of their life-long labors.

Mary Ada was a member of the Anna United Methodist Church, the Illinois Retired Teachers Association, the Monday Club and Thursday Club (she was an avid bridge player), and was an inactive member of the Daniel Chapmen Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mary Ada had several delights in her later years. Of course, being surrounded by children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren was number one, barely. Getting to play bridge was a close second. On bridge day her step quickened and enthusiasm increased. A third delight concerned Mary Ada's uncanny memory of her many students. When a former student would walk up to her and introduce herself, the student may not have been immediately recognized, but the mention of her name brought back memories and Mary Ada was usually able to let the student know that she was remembered.

Mary Ada is survived by her four children, W. David (Linda) Parks of Jonesboro, Floyd W. (Carole) Parks of Wellington, England, Diane M. Ward of Fort White, FL, and Darryl W. Parks of Anna; five grandchildren, Maria J. (Jamie) Bridgeman of Cape Girardeau, MO, John D. Parks of Anna, Rebekah S. (Allen) Plott of Anna, Charles F. (Tripp) Ward, III and Allison D. (Garrett) Courville of Fort White, FL; fourteen great-grandchildren, Clayton Bridgeman, Erikah, Emily, Esten, and Evan Parks, Curtis, Amanda, Timothy, and Daniel Plott, Charlie Ward, Nathan Benson, Landon, Mikalah, and Madison Courville.

She is also survived by a sister, Miriam Orr of Underhill, VT, a sister-in-law, Grace Pope of Harvard, IL, two brothers-in-law, Daniel Parks of Florence, MT, and Roger Parks of Moweaqua, IL, and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Walter; two brothers, Charles and Austin Pope; and one brother-in-law, John Parks.

Mary Ada's body has been donated to the Southern Illinois University Medical Department.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00PM on Sunday, November 19, 2017 at the United Methodist Church in Anna, with Pastor Carl Johnston officiating. Visitation will be held from 12:00PM until the hour of service at the church.

Memorial contributions may be made to the First United Methodist Church of Anna or the Union County Historical Society and will be accepted at the church.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 19. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church of Anna  
Anna, IL

## church service

NOV 19. 2:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church of Anna  
Anna, IL

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Ada Parks*

October 23, 2023 at 06:26 AM



“ *I will have fond memories of Mrs. Parks. Her kindness was genuine & lasted for several generations ! God Bless you all. She will be remembered by many. Walt Schroeder*

**Walt Schroeder** - November 18, 2017 at 09:43 PM



“ *Miriam Orr, Ron & Linda Turner, Mary Antich purchased the Rose Romanesque Bouquet for the family of Mary Ada Parks.*



**Miriam Orr, Ron & Linda Turner, Mary Antich** - November 16, 2017 at 02:15 PM



“ *Diane and Darryl, I am so sorry for your loss. What a wonderful blessing that your Mom lived to be 97 years young. You are in my prayers.*

*Marty Searcy, Avondale AZ*

**Marty Searcy** - November 14, 2017 at 06:09 PM

BB

“ So sorry about your loss. Mrs. Parks will always have a special place in my heart. When I sew or cook I remember so many things she taught us. Many of those skills I have passed on to my children. She was a kind and special lady.

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**Betty Jo Bird Bishop** - November 12, 2017 at 08:59 PM