

Norma G. (Platt) Barger, 93 a former resident of Portland passed away on Tuesday, February 2, 2010 in Santa Monica, California. Norma was born on August 8, 1916 in Van Wert, Ohio the daughter of Jacob R. & Nellie A. (Shreeve) Platt. She is one of twelve children, three sisters of which survive; Mary Catharine Blunk (husband Roy) of Portland, Indiana, Mable Jean Caylor of Pennville, Indiana and June Marie Williamson of Portland, Indiana. She attended Portland High School for two years, then she worked as a seamstress at the Jay Garment for many years. She participated at the Portland Civic Theater until she went to the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio. Then she received a scholarship for theater and went to Cape Cod, MA for two years and then moved to New York City, NY, for a short time until she went into the service.

She joined the Marine Corps in November 1943 to finish out her boyfriend's term after he was shot down in France. In the Marines she ended up as a newspaper reporter and also a secretary at the Intelligence office in Quantico Base in Virginia. Then she transferred to Santa Anna Marine Base where she was discharged.

After the war she used her G.I. Bill to attend school, she attended a junior college for a year until U.C.L.A accepted her and she achieved her B.A degree and then her teaching credential. She then went to U of MI in Ann Arbor to obtain her degree in television directing since U.C.L.A. did not grant those degrees. Norma continued her quest for education for the rest of her life, even taking classes until she was 92 years old.

Norma's first teaching job was 12th grade English at Santa Monica High School. During the summers she traveled with the theater group from Tustin, CA to Kalamazoo, MI for a couple years and then for the last eight years she was a counselor until she retired from the High School after 31 years there.

In 1973 she married Ray Barger, in Las Vegas on July 4, they lived in Santa Monica, and were married for 19 years, until his death on April 9, 1992. Although she did not have any children with Ray, she had a friend Kris Mashburn of Ojai, California, who was like an adopted daughter. Kris was a student at the High school where Norma worked. She came into Norma's office everyday and helped her with her paperwork. Norma made Kris promise that she would graduate from college. After Kris graduated with a specialty in Bats, she is now teaching in the natural science field in California. She became a part of Norma's everyday life as an adopted daughter.

A memorial service will be held on February 20, 2010 at the Williamson & Spencer Funeral Home, Portland Chapel. From 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. there will be a visitation, then the service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Pastor Jim Nichols will officiate the service with burial to follow at the Salamonina Cemetery, Salamonina, Indiana.

Arrangements made by the Williamson & Spencer Funeral Home. To extend your condolences to the family, please visit www.williamsonspencer.com

Contributed by Joan Shoffner – no source listed