



## Marian Joyce Gillin

October 24, 1924 - August 17, 2023

"Grammy" Marian Joyce Gillin

October 24, 1924 - August 17, 2023

Wenatchee, Washington

Marian Joyce Deardorff "Grammy" Gillin, our cherished mother, grandmother, confidante, Christian, and friend, peacefully slipped away from us on August 17, 2023, at the age of 98.

Marian was born at Wenatchee's Deaconess Hospital on Oct. 24, 1924, the first child of Noble and Ethel (Buntain) Deardorff. Her birth soon was followed by the arrival of sister Thelma and brothers Stan and Wayne - all born at Deaconess between 1926 and 1930. Marian attended first grade at Sunnyslope School and second grade at Whitman School before the family moved to Mossyrock, Wash., during the Great Depression. "Nothing was ever wasted, and we learned the value of a dollar at a young age," Marian wrote in a personal memoir. The family returned to Wenatchee in 1933 where Marian's father served as minister at the Sunnyslope Church of the Brethren. As a preacher's daughter, Marian remembers teenage years filled with what she called "Thou Shalt Nots" - no dancing, makeup, playing cards, or going to movies. Still, there were good times hiking to the Burch Mountain timberline, peeking through the fence at Wenatchee Chiefs baseball games, and spending time with Sunnyslope friends.

Marian graduated from Wenatchee High School in 1942. She attended LaVerne College in California through 1944, then graduated from Manchester College in Indiana in 1946. Marian met her future husband, Dean Gillin, while both worked for Brethren Press, the publishing house of the Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Ill. The story goes that Dean took one look at Marian and remarked, "That's the girl I'm going to marry." His prediction came true on Aug. 3, 1948, when Dean and Marian wed at the Sunnyslope Church of the Brethren in a service officiated by Marian's father. They made Wenatchee their home.

Dean and Marian were parents to six sons. As a result, Marian's days were filled with cooking, sewing, gardening, canning, cleaning, PTA meetings, Scout den meetings, baseball, hockey, Wenatchee Youth Circus, trips to music lessons, and school band. All six boys were Wenatchee World newspaper carriers, with Marian serving as their #1 substitute. Over the years, the family kept an assortment of milk cows, a horse or two, dogs, cats, pet rats, and on one occasion, a baby skunk. At harvest time, Marian worked in the family cherry orchard and for several years packed fruit in local warehouses to supplement the family income. She also taught home economics for one year at a school in West Covina, Calif., before her marriage to Dean and after marriage, served as bookkeeper for Stallings Athletic Company in Wenatchee.

In 1978, Marian made the easy transition to the role of grandmother, eventually becoming beloved "Grammy" to 14 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Marian and Dean enjoyed many travels together, but Marian always said she was glad to get home. Her favorite gatherings were the family's apple cider-making party each October and the Chillin' Gillin family reunion every August

at Camp Koinonia, the Brethren camp near Cle Elum. Her focus was always on her family. Until the age of 95, Marian hosted any family member available for Wednesday Night Dinners. Her table was always filled with delicious, healthy, and ample foods.

Marian's life was marked by service to her church and community.

At the Sunnyslope Church, her second home, Marian served in just about every capacity short of preacher: Sunday School teacher, worship service planner, deacon, accompanist. She was accomplished on both piano and organ. Marian made dozens of beautiful quilts; by the time she finished high school, she had already completed four. She was a longtime member of the NCW Quilt Guild and the Piece Corps, where she spent hours sewing and chatting with friends. She was a lively conversationalist. When Marian entered a crowded room, she always looked around for friends. If she failed to find one, she made one. Marian was a reliable Red Cross blood donor, giving 99 pints. Her generosity in all ways was remarkable. She walked the way of Jesus, comforting the sick and old with casseroles and kind words, looking for the good in people, making time for others, and putting others before herself.

Her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren could ask for no better role model in living a simple, rewarding, gracious, and splendid life.

Marian was preceded in death by her parents, by husband Dean, and by sister Thelma and brother Stan. Survivors include sons Keith of Everett; Scott of Kingman, Ariz.; Gary (Susan) of Wenatchee; Tony (Evy) of Wenatchee; Craig (Lisa) of Spokane; and Kelly (Patty) of Wenatchee. She is also survived by former daughters-in-law Bobbie Gillin, Dianne Gillin, and Greta Gillin, brother Wayne (Laura) Deardorff and sister-in-law Martha Deardorff.

A Memorial Service will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 28, at the Brethren-Baptist Church, 535 Okanogan Ave., Wenatchee. In the spirit of Marian's generosity, donations can be made to a charity or agency of your choice.

# Tribute Wall

JM

“ *Jane M. purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Marian Joyce Gillin.*



---

**Jane M.** - October 25, 2023 at 09:15 AM

DG

“ *Marian was my forever Mother - in- love... my second Mom, friend and confidant.*

---

**Dianne Gillin** - September 02, 2023 at 04:57 PM

GS

“ *Sweet, sweet Marian. You meant so much to me and my daughter, Meghan. She was with me when we read of your passing. You were always such an inspiration. Thank you for your beautiful music in church. The Parsleys loved you so. Peace and love. Gala Parsley Smythe*

---

**Gala Parsley Smythe** - August 28, 2023 at 03:44 PM

DA

“ *Marian, mother of good friend Keith - what an astonishingly full life, full of love and service to her family and community. My lasting memory of her will be getting off the eastbound train many years ago as it stopped in Wenatchee, and seeing Marian waiting for my traveling companions and me with fresh cookies she made for us. She was just a lovely person, one for the ages. Go in peace, Marian.*  
*Dave Abbott*

---

**Dave Abbott** - August 26, 2023 at 04:46 PM