



## Selma Irene Bonslett

September 1, 1916 - January 12, 2014

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Selma Irene (Larsen) Bonslett, long-time resident of Gridley, CA, passed away at Central Washington Hospital in Wenatchee, WA on Sunday morning, January 12, 2014, at the age of 97. Selma was born in Los Angeles, CA on September 1, 1916, to Hans and Irene Larsen, the third of seven daughters, all of whom have preceded her in death except for her younger sister, Mira Wright of Las Vegas. At the age of ten, Selma arrived in Gridley to live with Elizabeth Betz, a widow who needed help on her chicken farm. She attended Gridley schools, graduating from Gridley High in 1935. Shortly after graduation, she was hired by the City to work in the welfare and family services department, with later employment including seasonal work at Libby's, Myers plumbing, Dodini Pharmacy and finally, Bremers Hardware. Selma was also a member of the Eastern Star, was in the presidency of the Gridley Women's Club, and attended the United Brethren Church. In 1942, she married Robert Bonslett, a local rice farmer whose family arrived in this area after the civil war. They were to have two sons, Robert A. Bonslett and James H. Bonslett, and two daughters, Rebecca I. Elwell of Wenatchee, WA and Susan M. Jensen of Chico, CA.

Selma always had a smile on her face and a marvelous sense of humor. She was a great cook, providing many meals for her church, people in need, and the duck hunters. She was always thinking of others, stopping by to care for their needs. This extended to her husband, who passed in 1981, and her son, Robert, who was stricken with Multiple Sclerosis and whom she served until she reached the age of 80. He passed in 2003. She loved to travel, especially on the train, a love that began when she lived in Needles, CA, where her father was employed by Santa Fe as a conductor. Although her talents were many, including painting ceramics, cooking, sewing and yes, playing cards with the children, her greatest gift was a never-ending ability to make everyone and anyone feel welcome in her home. She moved to Wenatchee about eight years ago to help her daughter, Rebecca, after an illness in the family. But she continued to visit Gridley and Chico during most of this period, except for the last two years due to failing health. Nevertheless, she never ceased to enjoy life, going out to breakfast with her granddaughter, Heidi, and making a run every Saturday with her daughter, Becky, for coffee and a maple bar.

Selma is survived by daughters, Becky (Terry) Elwell of Wenatchee, Susan (Peter) Jensen of Chico, CA; son, Jim Bonslett of Gridley, CA; grandchildren, Heidi (Edward) Angerstein of Wenatchee, Courtney Elwell of Seattle, Maggie (Matt) Boles of Wenatchee, Mikaela Elwell of Denver, CO, Sean (Tracie) Jensen of Paradise, CA, and David (Sylvana) Jensen of Chico, CA; great-grandchildren, Kennedy, Austin, Cole, Sam, Ava, Natalie, Berkeley, Gavin, Alex, Sutter, Adam, Annie, and Rachel; and great-great-grandson, Travis.

We wish to express our special love and thanks to all those who knew and loved her during these last several years, with extra special thanks to Dr. Mandi Robertson, Christine Quinn, and Dr. Michelle Strauss for their compassionate care.

Selma will be laid to rest on Thursday, January 16, 2014, in Wenatchee, WA. Donations may be made to Our House in Wenatchee, WA (Our House, 1708 Castlerock Avenue, Wenatchee, WA 98801). There will be a Funeral Service at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2014, at Telford's Chapel of the Valley, with Graveside Service to follow at Wenatchee City Cemetery.

Selma always said, "Don't be sad, look to the heavens and just smile!"

# Tribute Wall

BK

“ I grew up in Gridley. The Bonslett Ranch was right across the street. Our families knew one another. I often ran errands for my Mom and would go into Bremer's where Selma worked. She was always so nice to me. I always enjoyed being around her. I was just thinking about going into Bremer's and chatting with her just the other day. .. Remembering and I wondered where she was and then today saw the notice in the Gridley Herald. Such a truly lovely woman. God 's blessings to her family.

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**Brenda Huffman Kressler** - January 23, 2014 at 12:51 AM