

Mildred Harrison 99
Albion

Born at home in Lee Township, Mildred was the oldest child of Ray and Altha Reed. Her father worked for the County Road Commission while her mother was employed by Gale Manufacturing in Albion. She stayed with her grandmother while her parents were at work until her mother stopped working as their family grew larger.

As many children of the time, Mildred enjoyed playing outside and they used a little building on the property to play house in. She and her sister liked to stir up mud pies and play with the family dogs. When she wasn't out playing, one of her chores was having to cut wood with a crosscut saw and her father would scold her when she didn't pull it right.

She attended grammar school near Napoleon, then went to Wines School on Duck Lake Road, finally graduating from Albion in 1943. While in school, she played the trumpet in the marching band and was a member of 4H where she won many ribbons for her canning and sewing abilities.

As a teen, Mildred loved attending barn dances in Pulaski and Battle Creek with her friends. The girls would ride over in one car and the boys in another. After they paired up at the dance, they would all ride home together at the end of the night. It was at one of these dances where she met her husband, Wayne. They attended the same school but hadn't noticed each other. They dated for some time eventually tying the knot in 1949. After they married, they found a little apartment in Albion. Wayne worked for Russ Miller Chevrolet and Jenkin's Orchard, while Mildred worked as a bookkeeper for a local elevator.

After Wayne's uncle passed, they purchased the family farm where Mildred still lives and moved in with his aunt who was elderly. Wayne liked working at Jenkins orchard so much he decided to plant his own. They sold apples and cider to all the locals, and it was a fixture in the community until 2010.

Mildred would contribute to the farm by pruning trees, hauling brush, operating the tractor, and assisting customers. Mildred and Wayne had three children during this time, Kay, Gary, and Sue, which kept her very busy. She was a good cook and excellent baker, being well known for her apple pies which were always a big hit at the Albion Township Fire Department spaghetti suppers. Mildred's son Gary mentioned the time his mother had made a fresh apple pie and told him he couldn't have a piece, but after she went out of the house, his great aunt snuck him a piece, which did not make her very happy!

After they retired, she and Wayne enjoyed taking trips with the Jackson Trippers, visiting Hawaii with some friends and spending winters in Florida for 17-18 years while their son tended the orchards. They also enjoyed square dancing and she continues to love to sew.

These days Mildred likes going for rides, eating out, especially at Cracker Barrel, and playing cards at the Forks Senior Center. She also attends the First United Methodist Church and has a regular breakfast group. She loves watching sports, and follows her teams, Michigan State, and the Tigers closely.

The price of things has been one of the most notable changes to the world since she was younger. She also marvels over the new electric cars and cell phones, but her favorite invention is the air fryer. She received one as a present and uses it frequently.

Mildred feels that her greatest accomplishment is raising a wonderful family and just enjoying life. The lessons she's learned in life are to *just live with everybody and have a good time*. Also, enjoying her family because she didn't think she'd live to see her great grandchildren, but she has three now and loves it. Her advice to the younger generations is to *enjoy life to the fullest when you can* and her way of getting through hard times is to pray.