

Ona Bartlett Patterson

February 19, 1930 ~ March 27, 2022

Mrs. Patterson was my third grade teacher at Carl Sandburg Elementary. She inspired me to write poetry and stories. I didn't realize the power of writing until I was much older, but this is where my love of writing began. Mrs. Patterson had a poetry club after school that I loved going to. I still remember writing pages and pages about Lucky the leprechaun. She was the teacher that went above and beyond for all her students. I will never forget her influence in my life. I am currently a teacher and have been teaching for 23 years. I hope I can be as inspirational for my students as she was for me. Thank you Mrs. Patterson.

- April Worley

I was one of the lucky young teachers who was chosen to attend the Poetry in the Schools training. I learned so much from Ona. She inspired me to become passionate about the importance of writing. With her guidance I learned how to teach my students to put their thoughts to words using poetry. I shared my knowledge with my colleagues, and that year we published a poetry book that included every 6th grade student's work from five classes. Throughout my teaching career I used what she taught me to help students (and other teachers) develop writing skills. She was an amazing and gifted lady. She made a difference in my life and vicariously influenced every student I taught for 40 years.

- Linda J Eddington

Mrs. Patterson was extremely instrumental in my career choice. I always enjoyed her writing lessons when I had her as a teacher in 4th grade at Carl Sandburg Elementary. I still have all of my writing booklets from her lessons! From Glomer the Leprechaun to Panda, my stuffed teddy bear, those books where inspirational! She will definitely be missed. She is one of the reasons why I love writing and chose it as a career.

- Alisha Copfer (Tondro)

My Dads sisters were all gems, and the finality of the last of the Owen and Mabel Bartlett women's presence in the world is a significant season of grief. As I sit here and write at this hour, my parents are at Ona's viewing during this

sacred time of parting with the physical vessel that carried her soul, and the spirit of Bartlett women that had a deeply profound impact for good in the lives of her loved ones, next of kin, school students and faith congregation. Aunt Ona was like-a-sister to my Mom Darlene when she moved to Roosevelt in 1950's and met the Bartlett family as a teenager. Mabel, Ona, Elizabeth and Lela were all so good to my Mom Darlene during tender circumstances surrounding her time of adjustment to a new town & school. My Mom fell in love my Dad's sisters long before she became my Dad's girlfriend (and wife)! When spending time together in person, Ona's favorite way to communicate was through writing. She always made a point that she preferred to write than talk on the phone. Anyone who knew her, knew she was a gifted writer. Sometimes my Dad would forward some of the stories I wrote to his siblings via email, and it meant the world to me when Aunt Ona and Aunt Elizabeth sent a notes of compliment about my writing, being the author that Ona was. Though not one of her formally published books, my favorite book she wrote is Hours of Ours for her parents, siblings & extended family. Thanks to Jenny Jean Chivaro (Elizabeth's daughter) who organized Quilt Show vacations in Galveston, TX for the Bartlett sisters, my Mom got to nurture her relationship with Ona during their wonderful and wise Senior years. Traveling with Jenny & Bartlett sisters is a highlight of my Mom's life. I know from reading some of Ona's letters before and after, that it was a highlight of her life, too. Quoting a letter from Ona after attending the International Quilt Fair in Houston in 2006: "The whole thing [trip] was engineered by Jenny who was our chief chauffeur and tour guide. Lela also came, and needless to say, our conversations and visiting stretched far into each and every night. I returned just a couple of hours ago and have decided to write you instead of calling. I trust that you probably open up your email every so often. It was like visiting a massive art museum, but all the paintings were masterpieces of colorful fabric and thread instead of oil and canvas. We all had a wonderful time. I'm purely a novice quilter, but I'm really enjoying working with fabric now that I'm not correcting papers. I have much to learn but what fun I'm having! On Saturday, Jenny drove us to the Galveston Museum to see three of her beautiful quilts that were displayed there as part of a special exhibit." I admire Ona's Motherhood in all the happiness and sadness of her journey. It should be against the laws of humanity and nature for children to pass away before their parents! Ona walked through the heartache in loss of three children gone too soon, and daughter Gwen "Bunny" was only a teenager when she passed away. I admire how Ona weathered those storms while remaining consistently gracious, unselfish and lovely all the days of her life. When my parents lost a son too soon in 2015, Aunt Ona was a comfort and strength to them. She wrote: "My thoughts (and prayers) have been with you often throughout the past several days, and I've decided to send out a few lines tonight. It was about a week after Stan died that Bishop Buie approached me and asked if he might give me a blessing. (He knew Stan, as Stan had often attended church with me when he was in town.) Both he and his wife came to my home for this, and his blessing was a source of comfort that greatly sustained me throughout the trying days and months ahead. After Val passed, it was nearly two weeks afterwards that he again offered to give me another blessing. Perhaps you might wish to consider this. I offer this only as a suggestion. Jenny told me about the Vernal Cemetery lots and I know how very much this decision would please her mother. How very special for your Larry to be buried in the prettiest spot in the whole cemetery and also next to his Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle Don! Yes, many eyes were wet with tears on Thursday, but I'm sure Elizabeth and Don were up there smiling!" Thanks to Ona for the humility, wholesome example and blessings she contributed to our family, and thanks to all her loved ones for sharing her with us.

- Keri Bartlett Bullock

Mrs. Patterson taught my son in 3rd grade(Carl Sandburg Elem.). He always said his love of poetry came from her. Over the years, we exchanged a few letters. I much admired her. She was a great teacher and friend. Debbie Pienezza

- Debbie Pienezza

I loved being in her 3rd grade class. I still have many of the poems, art projects, etc that we did in her class. She was a wonderful teacher.

- Alysha Miller

Mrs Paterson was one of my all time favorite teachers. I had her for reading and writing in 2nd and 3rd grade and all of my other 4 siblings had her as a teacher as well! I loved her so much I named my Teddy bear Ona after her. I still have the poetry books she had printed and bound for us. I still have my poem about dandelions that she had laminated and I never see a dandelion without thinking of her. Too bad there aren’t more teachers like her.

- Heather Patton McEwan

I met Ona when she'd visit her sister, Elizabeth, when I was an activities assistant where Elizabeth lived. I got to know her and Jenny well and enjoyed when she'd visit. Oddly enough, I went to a neighboring elementary school near where Ona taught. (Whittier Elementary). I'm an sorry for your loss. She was a great lady.

- Allyson Douglass