

Ethel Mae Newman Gottfredson

September 29, 1934 ~ May 1, 2024

Ethel Mae Newman was born on September 29, 1934 at home in Springville, Utah. She was the youngest of 10 children born to Howell Robert Newman (originally from Holladay, Utah) and Irene Esther Clark (originally of North Adams, Massachusetts.)

She was preceded in death by her husband, Ches, and 3 of her children, Barbara, Eric, and Raymon. Her parents preceded her in death, as well as her siblings and their spouses. Her siblings included Gerald Robert, Elizabeth Clarine, Margaret Ann, Hazel Irene, Thomas Jay, Howell Pershing, William Albert, and Joseph Rueben, who all lived to adulthood. She also had a sister named June who died the day she was born.

She is survived by her children, Cheryl Lynne, LeAnn Cochran (OC), Delilah Kaye Holly, and Steven Howell Gottfredson (Jung Eun).

In her early years in Springville and Mapleton, Utah, Ethel learned to work. Her parents were always busy working to keep food on the table, and clothes on the backs of their large family.

Her father had a full time job at the Ironton Steel Plant, grew a large vegetable garden, and sold fruit from their fruit trees in Mapleton. He also supported the family in a variety of other ways.

Her mother stayed busy caring for her children and home. Ethel said she never saw her mother rest.

As soon as she was old enough, Ethel also went to work picking cherries and working at the Del Monte plant.

Ethel remembered having a lot of space to explore during her childhood because in both Springville and Mapleton, the children in the family had plenty of land surrounding their homes to keep busy exploring. Some of her other childhood memories included spending a lot of time jumping rope, playing jacks, and swinging.

In Mapleton, her best friend, Creta, lived across the street. When Ethel was fifteen, Creta's boyfriend brought a friend of his to visit. That day, she met her future husband, Montchesney Riddle Gottfredson, (Ches) a student at BYU. She said she didn't care much for him, but he was persistent. When he turned 19, he was called on an LDS mission to the Central Atlantic States.

They married shortly after she graduated from Springville High School on June 3, 1952. While Ches continued his studies at BYU, Ethel took care of the home. A family soon followed with Cheryl Lyn born June 10, 1953. Next, a daughter Barbara was born. She was full term, but stillborn. LeAnn was born March 25, 1956.

The family moved to Circleville, Utah, in 1956, where Ches did his student teaching. During this time, a son, Eric Scott was born. He lived for only a few months.

The family moved back to Provo, so Ches could get his Masters and Doctorate degrees from BYU. Raymon Ward was born on September 22, 1959, and Delilah Kaye was born on March 4, 1961.

They spent the next few summers in Ches' hometown of Ely, Nevada, where he worked in order to support his family and finance his education at BYU during the school year.

In 1962, the Gottfredson family moved to Hawthorne, California in order for Ches to take a teaching position at the LDS Institute at El Camino College in California.

While living in California, Ethel found out that her brother, Joe's, kidneys had failed. He needed a transplant. At this time, successful kidney transplants were extremely rare. Ethel's sister, Hazel, had bravely donated her kidney to her brother Joe, but her kidney was rejected due to an infection.

Ethel had also volunteered to donate her kidney, so at the age of 29, she gathered her courage to take her first airplane flight to Denver, Colorado to get evaluated as a potential kidney donor. She was anxious about both the flight, her brother, and the upcoming medical tests and possible surgery. When she got to Denver, where her parents were waiting to welcome her with a hearty meal, she couldn't eat.

Although kidney transplants were very experimental at that time, Dr. Starzl in Denver, Colorado was one of the few doctors who had successfully transplanted kidneys from a live kidney donor to a recipient. She remembered having medical tests to see if she would be a good match for a kidney donation for her brother. She was a match, although at that time, tissue matching was not used, and a date was scheduled for the surgery.

On March 3, 1964, a successful surgery was performed. Her brother Joe, lived for over 50 years with Ethel's kidney. Ethel lived nearly 60 years with only one kidney, which one doctor told me was "unheard of."

Steve was born in California in 1965. The family moved to Pocatello in 1967 where Ches began teaching at the LDS Institute at Idaho State University. Shortly after her youngest child, Steve, began school, Ethel decided to get a job outside the home. With the encouragement of a friend, she applied to be a teaching assistant at a nearby elementary school. She enjoyed working in the field of education, and continued working as an educator outside the home, for the rest of her professional career.

Ches's former mission companion and lifetime friend, Kay Edrington, was the principal of a new school in Montezuma Creek, Utah and recruited Ches to be a high school counselor at Whitehorse High School in Montezuma Creek, Utah. So, Ches took a Sabbatical leave from his job in Pocatello to move the family to Salt Lake City and attend the University of Utah to earn his Masters degree in Counseling. He chose to move the family to Montezuma Creek and began his career in counseling.

In Montezuma Creek, Ethel continued her career as a staff assistant at Whitehorse High School, but also began taking extension classes to become a teacher. She spent many hours driving to Blanding, Utah to take classes. She graduated from Weber State College (now University) on June 10, 1988, with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. She graduated Summa Cum Laude having earned straight A's in her college career, except for receiving an A- early in her college career from her husband, Ches. ■

She got an elementary teaching job at Aneth Community School, where she taught for 11 years.

Some time after Ches passed away, she retired and moved to Salt Lake City for several years. She lived in Ogden, near Kaye until she moved to Chubbuck, Idaho to be near Cheryl.

Ethel began home dialysis which was an innovation in kidney dialysis. (Always a brave pioneer in medical treatment.) Cheryl had retired, and had time to help Ethel when she needed it. Ethel lived for several years at a Senior apartment called Cottonwood Cove in Chubbuck, Idaho. She made many friends, and enjoyed her time there. She loved to play cards with friends, put puzzles together, and socialized. She moved to Brookdale Assisted Living center in Chubbuck and continued to play cards and put puzzles together. The caretakers there were very kind.

Ethel was a beautiful, kind, loving, giving person. She accepted people for who they were. Her friends included people from young to old. She shared her knowledge with many people from making Cowboy Cookies to Christmas Candy. People enjoyed being around her.

Her passing will affect many, although I am confident that her wish would be for all her friends and family to continue living their best life, and remember her as a good, kind, caring person.

A graveside service will be held at 1:00 pm on Friday, May 10th, at Mount Olivet Cemetery located at 1342 E 500 S, Salt Lake City, UT 84102.