Mary Ida Austin Hunt

June 23, 1918 ~ January 4, 2020

Mary Ida Austin Hunt passed away peacefully at the age of 101 on January 4, 2020. She was born June 23, 1918 in Battle Creek Michigan, daughter of Roy J. Austin and Nellie Moore Austin.

Mary Ida graduated from Battle Creek Central High School in 1936, and received her undergraduate degree from Western Michigan University in 1940.

Mary Ida married her high school sweetheart, Harry Brainard Hunt, of Battle Creek on Jun 1, 1943. After his service in the Army during WWII, they returned to Battle Creek where twin daughters were born in 1947, and later a son in 1951. After raising their family, Mary Ida was employed in 1965 on the faculty of the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology of Western Michigan University. Years later she retired as Associate Professor Emerita from WMU, but continued to work part-time as a clinical supervisor at the university until she was 83 years old. Mary Ida specialized in the development of therapy for aphasia and augmentative communication methods for the severely speech impaired. In 2011, she received the Distinguished Alumni award from her department at WMU for her dedicated service.

Mary Ida harry lived over 45 years on Gull Lake where they routinely opened their home to family and friends for boating. They enjoyed golfing for several years. Mary Ida pursued flower gardening as a hobby. She also loved music. Weekly big-band dances, violin, and singing the lyrics to every musical were commonplace. At the age of 98, she taught herself to play the piano by ear, and she frequently entertained the residents of Cedarwood with the old familiar melodies. At the age of 100, she was "transplanted" from Michigan to Utah to spend her final year living near her daughter.

Mary Ida was beloved by her family, friends, and students for her quick wit and caring nature. She quickly turned any conversation into a personal interview with sage advice. (She's probably interviewing St. Peter right now.)

Mary Ida is survived by her children: Patricia Passey (Bill) of Sandy, UT; Marilyn Sten (Arnold) of Mechanicsburg, PA; and Dave Hunt (Christine) of Kansas, MO; plus several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband of 73 years, Harry B. Hunt. Gratitude is expressed to Encompass Hospice, Hospice Care of Southwest Michigan, The Fountains of Kalamazoo, and Cedarwood Senior Living in Sandy for their caring staff.

A visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 8 from 6:30-8:00pm at Larkin Sunset Gardens in Sandy, UT.