

Laura Johnson

Laura Jane Dial Johnson died in Santa Rosa, California, on March 31, 2019 at the age of 96. She was born on a farm near Manhattan, Kansas, on January 20, 1923, but her family moved to Battle Ground, Washington, in the early 1930's when the Depression and drought years severely affected Kansas farming. She was just ready to start 6th grade, where her teacher was Mr. R. S. Durkee.

Laura Jane and her brother Clarence Dial were both accomplished musicians. They had lovely voices, and they played the piano at the Battle Ground Community Church. They also played duets on the marimba, one time winning a first prize of \$15 at a talent show in Vancouver.

She graduated from Battle Ground High School in 1941, and after graduation she kept house for her father and brother, gave piano lessons, and worked as an usherette at the old Bee Gee movie theater. In the fall of 1942 she met a sailor named Wynne (Bud) Johnson at church when he was home on leave visiting his parents Carl and Lenore Johnson; his father was the superintendent of Battle Ground schools at that time. She and Bud became pen pals during World War II. In May of 1945, she packed the wedding dress she had sewn and took the train by herself to Chicago to marry her special sailor, who had just received his commission as an Ensign. Over the years they lived in Pullman, Everett, Napavine, and Lacey before moving to Rancho Cordova, California, where her husband was a professor of counseling at Sacramento State. She became an elementary school teacher while raising five children and serving as a church organist.

She was preceded in death by her husband Wynne Johnson in 2002, sons Larry Johnson and Carl Patrick Johnson, parents George and Frances Dial, and brother Clarence Dial. She is survived by a son Ted Johnson, daughters Kathy Johnson and Deanna Johnson, a sister-in-law Barbara Potter, seven grandchildren, and many great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. A celebration of life for Laura Jane Johnson was held on May 25th at the Santa Rosa, California United Church of Christ.



To view the obituary, please go to www.therelector.com/obituaries.