



## Clara E. Samuelson

February 27, 1922 - August 20, 2023

Clara Elizabeth Samuelson, age 101, passed away on Sunday, August 20, 2023, at her home in Storm Lake, Iowa.

Funeral services will take place Saturday, August 26, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Storm Lake. The service will be livestreamed through St. Mark Lutheran Church Facebook. Visitation will take place Saturday, August 26, 2023 from 9:30 a.m. until the time of the service at the church. Burial will be in the Fairfield Township Cemetery in Albert City. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to St. Mark Lutheran Church in Storm Lake or to Iowa Central Community College: Melvin V. and Clara E. Samuelson Scholarship. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements.

Clara was born February 27, 1922, in Saratoga Township, Howard County, Iowa, to Maren Marie (née Nielsen) and Adolph Marinus Gregersen, recent immigrants from Denmark. Clara's education began at age four in a one-room schoolhouse, Saratoga #5. On March 1, 1929, soon after her seventh birthday, her parents moved to Buena Vista County where Clara graduated from Fairview School (Elk Twp.) and earned a Two-Year Normal Diploma from Buena Vista College in 1940.

At the age of eighteen, Clara began her teaching career in Albert City,

teaching fourth grade and junior high classes, from 1940-1946. In Albert City, she also met her husband, Melvin Samuelson; they married on October 27, 1944. Clara continued teaching in Albert City from 1944 -1946. She joined Melvin from April to August, 1945 in Ft. Pierce, FL as the US Navy was preparing for the Japanese invasion. In late August Clara was returning by train to Albert City with Melvin, who was on a two week leave when V-Day was announced.

Clara and Melvin shared life for seventy years until his death in May, 2015. Before moving to their Storm Lake home in 1967, they made three moves as Melvin took on new positions in public school education and they raised four daughters. Clara went on to earn a B.A. from Buena Vista College in 1959 and school librarian certification in 1961. Between 1961 and 1967, Clara filled various part and full-time positions in the Alta School as librarian and junior high English teacher. She taught fourth grade in Truesdale (1967-1969); elementary librarian for Storm Lake Schools (1969-1974) as well as teaching some junior high English classes; corrective reading teacher at St. Mary's (1974-1985); she taught her final year as Chapter I Reading teacher in the Storm Lake Schools.

Throughout a life spent in Buena Vista County, Clara enjoyed being involved in various organizations, many times taking on leadership roles: Girl Scouts, Girls 4-H, A.A.U.W., P.E.O., American Scandinavian Foundation, Stephen's Ministry, Sunday School, docent at Harker House and other community volunteer work, and bridge clubs. She took pleasure in reading, gardening flowers and vegetables, canning, sewing clothing, recycling fabric into quilts.

Clara enjoyed travel and made family road trips a learning experience, bringing reference books to share in the car, and making sure stops had a learning component. From the tabernacle in Salt Lake City, wildflowers on the way up Pike's Peak to the Smithsonian in Washington DC - she was the family

tour guide. She especially enjoyed the two trips she and Melvin made to Scandinavia (1975 and 1993). Seeing her parents' homeplaces and sharing time with her relatives in Denmark was very meaningful, as it was for Melvin to see his family homeplaces and spend time with his relatives in Sweden.

Preceding Clara in death are her husband Melvin, her parents Adolph and Maren Marie Gregersen, sisters Lillian Swanson Holstein and Vivian Toomer, nieces Anita Toomer Coon and Janet Swanson Porter. She is survived by her brother Kenneth Gregersen of Ankeny, four daughters Colleen (Mike) Last of Mason City, Linda (Jim) Klingensmith of Pittsburgh, Brenda Samuelson, and Christine Samuelson of Los Angeles; her grandchildren Gretchen (Last) Stanley, Andrew Last, Megan (Last) Koch, Joseph Last, Katherine Klingensmith, Meade Klingensmith, Erik Olson, and Kai Olson; her great-grandchildren Noah Stanley, Christian Stanley, Marinus Nordstrom, Myles Koch, Albert Koch, and Adelaide Waxlax.

# Cemetery Details

**Fairfield Township Cemetery -- Albert City**

## Previous Events

### Visitation

**AUG 26.** 9:30 AM (CT)

St. Mark's Lutheran Church -- Storm Lake  
1614 West 5th Street  
Storm Lake, IA 50588  
<http://www.stmarkstormlake.com/>

### Funeral Service

**AUG 26.** 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Mark's Lutheran Church -- Storm Lake  
1614 West 5th Street  
Storm Lake, IA 50588  
<http://www.stmarkstormlake.com/>

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the album Video



Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - August 28, 2023 at 10:36 AM



“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - August 25, 2023 at 04:43 PM



“ *Deepest Sympathy to you and your families Colleen. What a life well lived.*

*Laurie Gaffney*

Laurie Gaffney - August 23, 2023 at 01:18 PM



*Thanks Laurie for thinking of us. Colleen*

Colleen Last - August 28, 2023 at 08:33 PM

AS

“ All of us at The Music Man Square planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Clara E. Samuelson.

All of us at The Music Man Square - August 23, 2023 at 12:02 PM

AS

“ All of us at The Music Man Square purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Clara E. Samuelson.



All of us at The Music Man Square - August 23, 2023 at 12:02 PM

SB

“ Prayers for Clara's family. Remember her fondly as the grandmother of two of my students.

Sue Barlow - August 22, 2023 at 10:15 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Clara E. Samuelson.



August 22, 2023 at 04:31 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Clara E. Samuelson.

August 22, 2023 at 04:31 PM

PK

“ Linda and family.....Linda and I were classmates at Storm Lake. I remember your mother as being such a gracious woman. She always had a sweet smile. I know how much she will be missed.  
*Patricia Johnson Kirby*

---

**Patricia Kirby** - August 22, 2023 at 04:04 PM

MG

“ Mrs Samuelson was my Jr. High English teacher at Alta - I was new to the school system having transferred from rural parochial school - she told us we should learn a new word every day (I think this may have been influenced by her parents) and always had a wonderful lesson to impart - one of my favorites was "Speech is silver and Silence is golden" - she was so kind and intelligent. Great Teacher! You were blessed to have her as a mother. - Mary Ewoldt Gebers

---

**Mary Gebers** - August 22, 2023 at 03:44 PM

RK

“ So sorry. She was a lovely lady. My condolences to her family.

---

**ruth ann peterson kane** - August 22, 2023 at 02:07 PM

TK

“ Clara was such a nice, graceful lady. I loved her laugh and deeply admired her kindness. I'm so grateful for the friendships our families had.

---

**Teresa Koch** - August 21, 2023 at 03:11 PM

CP

“ *Dearest Brenda and Family, I am heartbroken to hear the news of Your Mother passing today. She was the sweetest Mom in so many ways. Remember the great times that will bring her near to you!*  
*Claudia Olsen Pavlinik*

---

**Claudia Olsen Pavlinik** - August 20, 2023 at 03:43 PM