



Ethel B. Diercks

September 28, 1929 - February 1, 2026

Ethel B. Diercks, age 96, of Plankinton, South Dakota, formerly of Alta, Iowa, died February 1, 2026 at Aurora-Brule Nursing Home in White Lake, South Dakota.

Graveside services will take place Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. at Woodlawn Cemetery in Alta. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in ALTA is in charge of the arrangements.

Ethel Diercks was born September 28, 1929, at the Gustafson Homestead near Laurens, IA. She was the fifth child born to Justus and Ida "Anderson" Gustafson in the Albert City area. She was confirmed in the Covenant Mission Church and graduated from Albert City High School in 1947.

Ethel married Richard G. Anderson on September 18, 1948, in Nebraska City, Nebraska. To this union, their daughter, Janet, was born. On August 1, 1987, she married John P. Diercks at her acreage northeast of Alta, Iowa. Ethel and John had a wonderful partnership for 10 years and 10 days before he passed away on August 10, 1997. They loved buying and selling antiques together.

Ethel enjoyed accounting and held positions at Albert City Savings Bank, John Deere Implement of Laurens, Hygrade Food Products, McDonald's, and Pro Pork Associates of Cherokee. She worked for 21 years at Hygrade Food

Products before it closed in 1983. While there, she was promoted to Traffic Manager, making her the first woman to hold that position at a major meatpacking company in the United States.

Ethel loved horses all her life. She raised and showed top Quarter Horses and Miniature Horses in Iowa. She was a Lifetime Member in the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA), the American Miniature Horse Association (AMHA), and the Iowa Miniature Horse Club. She also served 7 years as a National Director of the AMHA.

In her later years, Ethel enjoyed sewing baby items and fleece quilts, which she sold alongside her daughter at regional craft shows. Ethel enjoyed watching "The Christian Worship Hour" with Pastor Harold Salem.

Ethel is survived by her daughter; Janet M. Holmes of Plankinton, SD; step-children, Claire (Robert) Baker of Whitestown, IN, John (Joan) Diercks of Indianapolis, IN, Dan (Becky) Diercks of Hagerstown, IN, Mary Jo Dare of Indianapolis, IN, and Linda Diercks of Cherokee, IA; step son in-law, Vick Anderson of Ankeny, IA; sister-in-law, Ardis Gustafson of Apache Junction, AZ; grandchildren, Donald (Karen) Holmes III of Wolsey, SD, Dan (Delesa) Bosworth of White Lake, SD, Debbi (Wayne) Stockstill of Virgil, SD, and Eric (Devena) Jackson of Woonsocket, SD; along with 7 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great-grandchildren, along with numerous nieces and nephews.

Ethel was preceded in death by her parents, Justus and Ida (Anderson) Gustafson; husbands, Richard Anderson and John Diercks; brothers, Earl (Doris) Gustafson, Lowell (Joyce) Gustafson, and DeWayne Gustafson; sister, Leona Gibbons; brother-in-law, Don Gibbons; stepson, Mike Diercks; stepdaughter, Katie Anderson; and great-granddaughter, Danielle Holmes.

Cemetery Details

Woodlawn

Alta, IA

Upcoming Events

Graveside Service

MAY 20. 11:00 AM (CT)

Woodlawn
Alta, IA

Tribute Wall

RE

“ Ethel and I met when my dad and I went to Alta to see her stallion, Premiere. We spent the day looking at her beautiful horses and talking "horse". From there we became good friends. She was always willing to share her knowledge and expertise. I will miss her.

Ruth Eberhard - February 27 at 05:44 PM

KA

“ I am sorry to hear of the passing of Ethel. I knew her over the many years i worked at the bank in Alta. We became friends, and I always enjoyed her many pictures of her miniature horses. I also would see her and always visit at the many crafts shows she would sell her beautiful blankets and things. She called me maybe a year ago just to visit and see how I was doing. Told me about enjoying living with her daughter, and that she still liked to ride the lawnmower and help do things she could. I really enjoyed her. I am sorry for the families loss, and maybe I will see Doyle and visit with him. You have my sincerest sympathy. 💕🙏

Kim Walsh, Alta - February 16 at 09:24 AM

JO

“ My sympathy to you, Janet, and your family. it seems like Ethel and I have known each other for ever. We were team mates on Albert City's six on six girls basketball team about 80 years ago. The last few years we kept in touch by telephone, Prayers. Joann Hansen Oatman.

Joann Oatman - February 15 at 06:38 PM