



## Julia Gray

October 22, 1910 - November 16, 2015

Julia Eloise Gray

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Julia Eloise Gray passed away on November 16, 2015 at the remarkable age of 105. She was the daughter of Victor Wallace and Julia Etta Haselton and was born at their home in Swans Trail, a Norwegian farming community in Washington State. Julia was called Dooley by her friends and grew up living along the Snohomish River with her two brothers Ivor and Owen, her best friend Ruby and many other relatives from her mother's family. She often reminisced of her childhood and delighted her grandchildren with her memories of growing up on the farm in the days of Indians, gypsies and prohibition. These memories were among the fondest of her life.

After high school, Julia began training to be a teacher but then switched to nursing and graduated from Everett General Hospital as an RN. She met her husband to be Alden Kimball Gray while working at a hospital in Seattle. They were married in 1935 and moved to Corvallis in 1946. In Corvallis, Julia worked for the OSU infirmary as a night nurse for more than 20 years retiring in 1973. Her husband Alden passed away a few years later in 1977 but Julia continued to keep in touch with his extended family--the Rombouts in Belgium and the Grays in England and Washington and everywhere else.

Julia was curious about life, served her community and took pleasure in helping others without prejudice. She worked with the Girl Scouts, she was a president of the Antique Button Club and an active member of her church, Grace Lutheran, for over 50 years. In 1978, Julia began a lifelong relationship with two young students from Iran, Mina and Ali. She served as a conversant with foreign language students and became close friends with many of them and even visited some in their home countries. Julia traveled to places as far away as Japan, India, Egypt, Thailand, Guatemala, Scotland, Ireland and to many countries in Europe. Her trip to Guatemala to visit her nephew Jeff led to a heartfelt friendship with Ethel Taylor of England. These two ladies corresponded through letters and crossed the Atlantic many times over a period of 30 years to see each other in their own countries and even met up in Egypt.

Always eager to learn new things, Julia studied Spanish and became an accomplished calligrapher with her drawings often on display. She had an artistic flare with many things

and especially the way she decorated her home and displayed her collections of eggs and antique buttons and other creative arrangements. She liked to keep up with the times and studied popular books on etiquette to ensure she was current on how best to show others respect and appreciation.

Julia truly was a beautiful spirit who always looked for the best in others. Her outlook on life was positive. She believed that everyone was doing their best and that the “normal condition of man is to be joyful.” She is loved and survived by all of her children—Priscilla, Rebecca and Alden (Jay), her 11 grandchildren and her 16 great grandchildren.

A celebration of Julia’s life will be announced at a future date. . Please share your thoughts and memories for the family at [www.demosdurdan.com](http://www.demosdurdan.com).

# Comments

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“ I grew up across the street from Julia, at 637 NW 14th Street. I will never forget her kindness and generosity. Throughout my childhood, and over many holidays including Christmas and Easter, we woke up to find that sometime in the early morning hours, Julia had quietly delivered cookies and candies on our front porch. That wasn't a small task as there were five kids in my family! She never missed an opportunity to waive and say hello and was always interested in how we were doing.

I fondly remember sitting in her living room with a cup of hot cocoa as she asked about me and talked about herself including her travels. I marveled at her extensive collection of ceramic eggs and for each one, she had a story of who had given them to her, often an international student. Sometimes as I sat visiting with her, university students would come in the house and quietly go upstairs. Her life was greatly enriched by serving others and she especially enjoyed renting rooms to international students.

One memory that has stayed with me was sometime in 1978 or 1979 when upon going in the house, Julia brought out her math books and homework. I was surprised to see that she was studying math, but she explained that she had never felt confident with algebra and was determined to learn it. She didn't want that subject to get the best of her! Her passion for life and for people was incredibly refreshing and uplifting. I will remember her loving, kind spirit always.

Another memory... she often talked of her kids and I remember her mentioning her son, who lived near Monterey, California. I live in the San Francisco area and think of you when traveling to Monterey/Pacific Grove.

Blessings to each of her children and grandchildren.

Warmly,

Gina (Donahue) Clayton

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**Gina Donahue Clayton** - February 18, 2020 at 03:27 PM

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“ I lived next door to Julia on 14th Street in Corvallis for a number of years, beginning when I arrived in Oregon in 1977. Julia was very welcoming and friendly and the best neighbor you could imagine. She loved to show her keepsakes and photos from all her travels, and it was great fun to hear her tell about those places. Julia will be very much missed.

Flo Leibowitz - December 02, 2015 at 01:12 AM

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“ My mother Trudy Jacob and I both worked with Julia at Student Health Services, she in the Infirmary and I in the outpatient clinic. Our staff loved working with students and have a history of long employment. Mom retired after 22 years and myself at 31 years. It was a fun place to work we were glad to have known Julia. We were members of Grace Lutheran as well.  
My condolences to all the family.

Sincerely,

Judy Jacob McCann

Judy Jacob McCann, Sisters,OR - November 27, 2015 at 02:58 PM