



## Helene Whittemore

March 30, 1921 - April 1, 2019

On April 1, 2019, I was reunited with the love of my life, James H. Whittemore, who was waiting for me and whistling, "I'll Be Seeing You"! He was always such a romantic, and we adored each other. We met in Bonn, West Germany, shortly after the war.

Bonn was where I was born on March 30, 1921 to Josef Fassbender and Helena Mandt. I had a big brother, Christian, and he was always my buddy and protector. Growing up in Germany was good and bad. During my elementary and secondary school years, I was an avid star athlete; running in track and throwing the discus. I loved that. During World War II, I lost many lifelong friends and family. It was a difficult time. My grandmother was hit by shrapnel going to the bomb shelter and later died of those injuries. My aunt died in the bombing of Cologne.

Shortly after the war, as I said, I met Jim. He was such a charmer, and he could whistle a tune like no other. We married in Bonn and celebrated 70 years of marriage in September 2018. A month later, my dear James left me, and I missed him every day.

Coming to America was very exciting and scary for me. Leaving my family was so difficult, and I would never see my father again. When we came, we brought four-year-old, Brigitta, and six-week-old, Lark. We settled in Algona where I worked and raised our family. Gerald Josef was born in 1952, so now we had our little family of five.

I worked several jobs other than being a homemaker. My favorite was being Dr. Bourne's bookkeeper for many years. We made many moves with the family. Jim was always building a bigger and better home for us. In 1968 we left Algona moving to Texas where we stayed until 1974. Then we returned to Iowa and lived in Des Moines until 2009 when we moved to Minneapolis where our daughter, Brigitta, lived. We remained there until 2016 when we returned to Algona. Lark lived there and found us a place in Good Samaritan Home.

Wherever we lived, I loved to play golf. Jim and I would play, and I often beat him. We

played Bridge with many of our friends and family. I was an excellent cook and seamstress, making my son's (Zippy Is Silly) clown pants and knitting pieces of clothing for my grandchildren. Jenny, my sweet granddaughter and I loved to golf together. Losing her in 1995 was devastating to her Opa and me.

We loved having our grandchildren come and stay with us. Brigitta's two: David and Stefanie; Lark's two: T.J. and Jenny; and Gerry's two: Mimi and James, would come as often as possible, and I think they loved it. We adored them all.

While in Minneapolis, Jim lived in the VA Home, and I had an apartment. David, my grandson, and his wife, Lisa, and their boys, Jackson and Leo, would come over, so I could teach them Bridge. They called me "Bridge Yoda". I was a great Bridge player.

Jim, my love, and Jenny, my granddaughter, came to take me to paradise. What a reunion! I joined my mom and dad, my dear brother: Chris and wife, Lisalotte; my in-laws: O.J. and Laurine Whittemore; Jim's two brothers: Junior and wife, Barbara, and Gerry and wife, Betty.

Those I left behind are very sad, but I will hug and kiss them again one day. I left my two daughters: Brigitta Carnes and friend, Arnold Stern, of Rancho Mirage, California, Lark Ricklefs and Steve of Algona, and son, Gerry and wife, Karla, of Austin, Texas, sister-in-law, Georgeanne Kuhl and husband, Condon, of Maine, six beautiful grandchildren, nine wonderful great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

I have to tell you about the last week of my life. My grandson, T.J., Lisa, and sons, Tommy and James, came to celebrate my "98th birthday" early. What a fabulous time to see and be with them. My son came on Tuesday, and on Friday in the morning, Lark did my hair while the hospice music therapist played her guitar and sang. Lark sang a German song, and we sang Jim's and my song, "I'll Be Seeing You". That afternoon Lark planned a social gathering to celebrate my birthday. It was so nice. The following day on my birthday I received videos from grandchildren and great-grandchildren singing and wishing me a great day. I even got a "howling" birthday wish from Ziggy, David's dog.

What more could I ask for? I had all the love anyone could want and felt so blessed!

Private family services will be held at a later date.

# Comments

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Lentz Funeral Home - April 06 at 02:08 PM

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“ What a wonderful life she lived. I love the way her obituary was written. It gives us such a wonderful look at her life. My sympathies to Lark and all of the family.

Mary Ann Nygaard

Mary Ann Nygaard - April 06 at 09:11 AM



“ Wundervolle Bilder von meiner Cousine Leni, die ich sehr gemocht habe. Ich denke an Lark und alle in der Familie. Cousine Ingeborg Mandt aus Bonn/Siegburg.

Inge Mandt - April 06 at 01:32 PM



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Lark Ricklefs - April 05 at 12:19 PM



“ Wunderbare Fotos von meiner Cousine Leni und Ihrer Familie. Ich habe sie sehr gemocht. In Erinnerung an Dich, Deine Cousine Ingeborg Mandt aus Bonn/Siegburg.

Inge Mandt - April 06 at 07:00 AM