



## Della Elna Willis

October 24, 1925 - September 27, 2020

Della Elna Lucht Willis passed away peacefully on September 27, 2020 in Chestertown, Maryland, just short of her 95th birthday. Born October 24, 1925 in Lutherville Maryland to Rudolph and Ruth (Starr) Lucht, she was the second of seven children, and the oldest daughter. Her parents were itinerant farm workers, so the family was continuously on the move. At the age of 5 she gathered plants from the woods and her mother made wreaths that she and her brother sold door to door. By the time she was in the 6th grade, Della had attended 12 different schools. The family moved to Kent County in 1937, and there she remained in what she called “God’s Country” for the rest of her life. As a teenager during WWII, with few young males around to perform manual labor, she took on the job of a farm hand and had memories of working in the fields alongside German prisoners-of-war. A Kent County News article about how she rescued a man from being gored by a bull always bothered her because the article didn’t mention that the rescuer was a teenage girl. After graduating from high school in Chestertown, she worked at the local John Deere store, where she met Herbert Arthur (Greenie) Willis. Della and Greenie married in 1947 and bought a small farm in Quaker Neck, which became “The Mini Farm”. There they raised four of their own children, as well as countless others in her unofficial childcare center.

When she wasn’t doing farm work, tending children, bookkeeping for “Willis & Lynch” (Greenie’s small engine repair shop), serving as a precinct worker at elections, writing a social column about Quaker Neck for the newspaper, or

researching her family roots, Della wrote poems. These were old-fashioned rhyming poems about real-life situations, from her own unique, humorous, point of view. She wrote poems for birthdays, for her Sunday school class, for weddings – “about anything and anybody, for any reason”.

Despite little formal schooling of her own, she was a life-long inquirer, and she instilled the value of education in all her children. An essay she wrote about what the flag meant to her was printed in the Congressional Record. She seldom left Kent County but “the world was her oyster”, and her mailbox was her passport. She had pen pals throughout the world and corresponded with Queen Elizabeth, the King of Norway, Hammond Innes, and even First Lady Hillary Clinton.

Della’s goal in life was to every day “soothe someone’s soul”. She provided comic relief to grocery store stockers, and even her doctors. Her trademark cookies were on everyone’s wish list. Her flower beds along Quaker Neck Landing Road were annual spectacles that caught passing visitor’s eyes with their striking waves of color. She said, “Flowers are my way of making friends... they are my way of offering a tithe”. Her flowers became floral arrangements for garden clubs, home tours, and local weddings. Her grandchildren savored her special lima beans and corn on the cob, her willingness to pitch them baseballs well into her eighties. Everyone felt her unconditional love.

She was an active member of the Adult Sunday School Class at Christ United Methodist Church in Chestertown, where she shared and explored her Christianity and her deep spiritual beliefs.

Della was predeceased by her beloved mother, Ruth Lucht, her husband, Greenie, and five siblings. She is survived by her sister, Florence Sutton, and her children: Ginny Moore (Ted), Arthur Willis, Shirley Maase (David), and Terry Willis (Eileen McLellan), grandchildren, Tom and Bob Willis, Ian Moore and Heather Moore Renner, Eric Maase, and Joshua Willis, as well as 11 great-grandchildren – Alexis, Lily, Kaitlyn, Macy, Kacey, and Bobby Willis, Frida and Lukas Renner, Springer Moore, Jennah and Khadijah Maase.

Family, both near and far, were her greatest joys and nothing was more special than sitting in the background, watching us interact. She will always be there in our background.

Please honor her memory by helping to soothe someone's soul today.

# Previous Events

## Service

OCT 9. 11:00 AM (ET)

Fellows Helfenbien & Newnam  
130 Speer Rd  
Chestertown , MD 21620

# Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Della Elna Willis*



**Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home** - October 09, 2020 at 08:26 AM



*This doesn't appear to be the correct video uploaded for the memorial.*

**Carrie Heath** - October 09, 2020 at 08:55 AM

PM

*Della Elna Willis*

**Philip Alan Maase** - October 09, 2020 at 09:59 AM

CA

*Good Morning, Willis Family! Della loved flowers so much! These are beautiful!*

*Carolyn Apel*

**Carolyn T Apel** - October 09, 2020 at 11:07 AM

GM

*It helps to skip to about 15 minutes in when the actual service begins.*

**Ginny Moore** - October 09, 2020 at 02:35 PM



“ *Della Elna Willis*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Della Elna Willis*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM

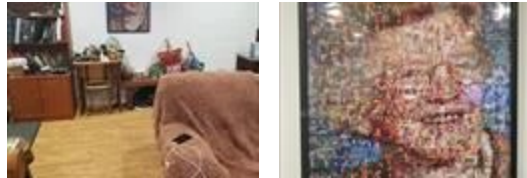


“ *Della Elna Willis*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *2 files added to the tribute wall*



**David** - October 09, 2020 at 12:50 PM

CA

“ Beautiful service! I have so many wonderful memories of Della! As a young bride, away from my home and family Della and the Mini-Farm were a wonderful place to spend time, especially while Paul was away at work. I learned to make her Carrot Cake and Chocolate Texas Sheet Cake, cook lima beans in milk....I remember being amazed at her enormous freezer ....and her flowers! Loved her flowers! So did my own mom. Remember the little plaque she had in the garden about flowers? My mother saw that the last time we were out there and liked it so much that my daughter Chris embroidered the saying and had it framed as a Christmas present for my mother that year. We still have it. Della was always the one we went to when we needed to try to figure out who was related to whom, what "so-n-so's" wife's name was, or anything else you might care to know about the Willis family! I remember making copies of many photos on a camcorder one year. They are all gone now, along with that camcorder, but the good times remain in my mind! A long life well lived! See you again, someday, Della!

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**Carolyn T Apel** - October 09, 2020 at 12:08 PM

 Carrie  
Heath

“ Aunt Della’s warm and charming spirit is and always will be part of the worlds she touched. I spent many summers & holidays on her and Uncle Greenie’s Mini-Farm growing up and remember as my heart would race and get excited to see the flowers or the old house covered in snow as we approached in the car down Quaker Neck Landing. No matter the season, Aunt Della welcomed us to spend time on the porch drinking her sweet lemon-tea, letting me chase & help feed the kittens or huddle inside by the giant wood stove, sitting in a hand-made rocker, smelling the ham & honey wafting from the kitchen. She was never bothered by anything; always a smile and a firm hug to greet us.

*I once fell from one of her old trees climbing along a large branch which broke with me under it in a flower bed one late summer day when I was about 8 or so, and family found me crying, hiding in a car after I somehow got out from under the huge branch myself. I was so upset because “ I broke Aunt Della’s tree!” She laughed so hard, hugged me and said she was happy I was ok and wasn’t worried about the tree. It has been years, but I still do, and probably always will remember the sound of her voice and her laugh. Her table was long and everyone was always invited. Peace to Aunt Della and to everyone who will miss her. Love, Carrie Lee*

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**Carrie Heath** - October 09, 2020 at 09:29 AM

JM

*Beautiful tribute Dear.*

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**Jean Maase** - October 09, 2020 at 10:18 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home** - October 09, 2020 at 08:20 AM

NW

“ *Nita Wieczoreck lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Nita Wieczoreck** - October 07, 2020 at 03:58 AM

LB

“ *Lisa Barry lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Lisa Barry** - October 02, 2020 at 09:39 PM

SD

“ *Sheila Blyman Dlugoborski lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Sheila Blyman Dlugoborski** - October 02, 2020 at 02:21 PM



“ *Della was and is a beautiful saint of the Lord as her Pastor. I remember when i first arrived to Christ UMC we had a birthday celebration for her in her home. She told me many stories of her life. I know that on her prayer list was always "all the children of the world". Della's parting advice to me was always...be good...and if you can;t be good, be quick! I look forward to the day of glad reunion at Christ's Throne.*

David Ryan - October 02, 2020 at 11:47 AM

RJ

“ *Rick & Jeanne lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



Rick & Jeanne - October 01, 2020 at 08:36 PM

TS

“ *Todd & Diane Smith lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



Todd & Diane Smith - October 01, 2020 at 07:41 AM

LS

“ *Liz Smith lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



Liz Smith - October 01, 2020 at 06:46 AM

JH

“ *Joan Hatcherson lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Joan Hatcherson** - September 30, 2020 at 01:35 PM

SC

“ *Steve Bonnie Cullis lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Steve Bonnie Cullis** - September 30, 2020 at 11:52 AM

ML

“ *We will truly miss Aunt Della. She will always be in our hearts and memories. God Take care of our family during these hard times.*

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**Matthew Lucht** - September 30, 2020 at 07:46 AM



“ *This is a beautiful obituary for someone who was obviously a beautiful person.*



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**Lori Campbell** - September 29, 2020 at 07:30 PM

MK

“ *The Cohey family had the great fortune of being part of the Lucht family thanks to Aunt Esther marrying Uncle Mervin. They embraced our family with love. Della was such an inspiration and I looked forward to her words of wisdom and quick wit. To a life well lived.*

*Fondly, Margaret Cohey Kaufman*

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**margaret kaufman** - September 29, 2020 at 12:55 PM

E(

*Aunt Delia is special to us all. We never stopped by the minifarm without her breaking out a camera and snapping a couple shots. Somehow her pictures always turned out perfect and she always got a copy to us. Love you Aunt Delle!*

*Speedy n Tammy*

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**Edward E. Sutton (Speedy)** - September 30, 2020 at 12:18 PM

DP

*Some of my fondest childhood memories include time spent at the farm with Aunt Della and my cousins. I can't help but smile and say how grateful I am to have known her. What a blessing she was!*

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**Darlene Lucht Pringle** - October 01, 2020 at 10:41 AM

JB

“ *So sorry to hear about Della. She was such an inspiration to our Adult Sunday School class and loved her poems! We had a lot of the same views. When I visited her at the nursing home she was always upbeat and happy to see me! Such a great lady!*



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**Joyce Benton** - September 29, 2020 at 10:02 AM

SG

“ Aunt Della was always a friendly and soothing presence. A kind soul, quick witted with a joke and so smart! The last time I visited her, she was so inspirational - lifting her weights and eager to go peer out the window. She did not complain about being wheel chair bound. Heaven’s flowers will have an added beauty with her as a resident now!



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**Starr George** - September 29, 2020 at 09:42 AM

AE

“ What a beautiful tribute to a wonderful lady! We should all strive to live as she lived. May the angels wrap their wings of comfort around her entire family, knowing that she is in the presence of her Lord.



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**Andrea & Timmy Edwards** - September 29, 2020 at 09:40 AM

MR

“ Max & Maryann Ruehrmund lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis



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**Max & Maryann Ruehrmund** - September 29, 2020 at 08:53 AM



“ *What a beautiful tribute for Aunt Della. She was truly a special gem and will be missed. So sorry for your loss.*

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**Kay Jenkins Lucht** - September 28, 2020 at 11:23 PM

TC

“ *Tina Campbell Cohey lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Tina Campbell Cohey** - September 28, 2020 at 08:25 PM

DE

“ *Donna Hubbard Edwards lit a candle in memory of Della Elna Willis*



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**Donna Hubbard Edwards** - September 28, 2020 at 08:05 PM



“ *Terry, Art, and families -- I am so very sorry for the loss of your dear mother. Terry, I love the stories of your family. Love and condolences from Lori Campbell and all of us here at NPM.*

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**Lori Campbell** - September 28, 2020 at 07:39 PM