

Obituary



KIRKLAND-BIRD,

Irene

July 31, 1936 -
May 20, 2025

Irene Kirkland-Bird 88, passed away at Manitou Lodge, in Watrous, Saskatchewan, May 20, 2025.

Irene was born on July 31, 1936, on the family farm near Guernsey, Saskatchewan, to parents Otto and Christine Frey. Irene was

the youngest of four children. Her siblings were Alvina (Toth), Harold Frey, and Frieda (McWillie).

She attended her elementary grades at Mohawk Park country school and moved with her parents to Watrous to attend high school. She worked after school at the bakery. Fun times were spent swimming at Manitou Beach and the large indoor mineral pools. Saturday nights there was dancing at Manitou's famous Dance-land. Music and dancing was always enjoyed at gatherings of family and friends. Irene would play her accordion, joining her brother and sisters as they played their violins, guitars or accordions.

After high school, Irene moved to Saskatoon to take a business course and worked at a paper company. It was there that she was introduced to Wilbert Kirkland, a farmer from Wilkie taking an engines and motors course.

Irene and Wilbert were married October 8, 1956. They built a new home on the Kirkland farm site, four miles

northeast of Wilkie. They had four children. Irene loved farm life and was an active partner on the mixed farming operation. She operated equipment large and small and ran for parts when needed. She tended to a large garden with the many beautiful flower beds around the well-groomed yard. She valued the love and support of her neighbours and enjoyed helping and being part of the community. Family trips were taken most years on summer days when they could. They were spent at the cabin at Cochin, on Jackfish Lake. They would enjoy fishing, boating, and socializing with many of their farm neighbours, who also vacationed there. In 1978 Wilbert suffered a brain tumor, changing their way of life. They moved to a new home in Wilkie, turning the operation of the farm over to their son David. Wilbert passed away in 1987. They had been married 30 years.

A few years later, while visiting her friend in Saskatoon, Irene was introduced to her widowed neighbour, Harold Bird. A second great match. Irene and Harold were married in 1992. Life was busy; volunteering for committees at their condominium complex and Irene was happy to help with the care of her sister, Alvina.

Harold and Irene enjoyed travels to Mexico and Cuba. During the summers, they would take their travel trailer on the road, visiting family and friends. With declining health in 2015, they moved into a retirement residence. In 2017, Irene moved to a nursing home. Harold passed away in 2018. They were married for 25 years.

In 2021, on the day of her 85th birthday, Irene returned to the community that she was raised in and always called home. She lived her last years at Manitou Lodge in Watrous. She cherished the companionship, of

her last remaining sister, Frieda McWillie. Irene expressed her thanks for the support she received from her family there.

Irene has left us with many loving memories and lessons of resilience to reflect on. She will be sadly missed by her four children, 11 grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren: Janice (Meldan) Ortynski. Family, Clayton Ortynski, Alessandra and Xavier. Sarah (Caleb) Grey Reina, Anika, Kaiya, and Larysa. Crystal (Sean) Armstrong, Lily, Sophie, and Jacob. David (Sian) Kirkland. Family, Dustin (Maddy) Kirkland, Lenna and Ellie. Bridget (Andrew) Walker, Russell and Mallory. Elaine (Harvey) Carberry. Family, Quinlan (Kristi) Carberry, Harper and Holland. Lorne (Jen) Carberry, Roslynn (Matthew) Boyko, Sophia. Kerry (Darrell) Huber. Family, Taylor, Brady and Brynn.

Irene's last wishes will be carried out by her family. She will be placed in her final resting spot beside her husband, Wilbert Kirkland in the Wilkie Cemetery.

Friends and family are welcome to join in this day of celebrating her life. The graveside service will be July 11, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. A social will follow from 2 to 5 p.m. at Janice and Mel's cabin at the north end of Days Beach on Jackfish Lake. For online condolences, tributes or memorial donations please visit: <https://fotheringham-mcdougall.com/>

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