



Irene Emily Placker

Our family's amazing mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother Irene Emily Placker has gone to be with her Lord. We will miss the great energy and love she invested in our family.

She has left behind a son Charles Placker and a daughter Sue Hallgren, both of Bellingham.

Her strong spirit has encouraged us.

She met her husband Bill while he was on leave before going to the Pacific to serve in the Marine Corps, writing to him faithfully and falling deeply in love with him. They had met while Mom was on a shopping trip to Seattle with a friend. A picnic at Greenlake that day and many letters led to a lifelong strong bond of love. A bond that led Bill to send his mother money for an engagement ring for Irene. A bond of love that gave Irene the confidence to board a train to Corpus Christi, Texas, with her cedar chest filled with gifts from her family and friends, but no family members. A leap of faith, love, and trust. Bill's grandfather G.W. Helms married them. A marriage that was strong and ended when Bill passed away in July of 2009. They'd had 63 ½ years together – a living example before our family of love, respect, friendship, and strength. They also modeled hospitality and the importance of a good sense of humor.

A few months after they were married, they moved to Bellingham in 1946, where their son Charles was born January 3, 1947, and Susan in July of 1949. Barbara was born August 1950 and passed September 11, 1950.

They built three houses together, working side by side on plans, as a team.

In 1951 Irene went to work as a telephone operator at Pacific Northwest Bell where she worked until 1960 when the company went to the "dial system".

Even while working different shifts she managed to cook nutritious meals and many baked goods for our family and keep an orderly home. The home they had built on Hollywood was finished in 1960.

In 1968 they purchased acreage on Grandview Road in Ferndale and renting a home next to their property they began to plan and build their third house together. This home was filled with laughter, many Sunday dinners with family and a park-like setting that their grandchildren enjoyed along with many barbecues where Bill would say, "Irene, we need more meat, those grandkids are going to be hungry." Mom loved to cook! Good thing because Dad loved to feed people.

The tractor provided fun rides with Grandpa and their garden grew the best carrots ever, a constant treat every summer for the grandkids.

Upon retirement they moved to Mena, Arkansas to be near Bill's family, and also renovated a house they bought as a rental. Then on to the next move to Lake Havasu, Arizona, where they purchased a home and enjoyed making new friends.

Feeling the need to move back to Bellingham, they sold that home and

returned here to live the rest of their lives close to family, enjoying their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Bill went home to be with the Lord in July of 2009 and Irene May 26, 2019. I'm sure they are enjoying their new home. They will be greatly missed by all of us. Both were loved. Both were amazing. Many happy memories will comfort all of us.

Irene was preceded in death by Bill and an infant daughter, her parents, and two brothers.

She leaves behind children Charles Placker and Sue (Daryl) Hallgren, both of Bellingham; grandchildren Holli (Brian) Gomes of Longview, WA, Shawn Marie (Dave) Jones of Ferndale, WA, David (Kristin) Hallgren of Pennington, NJ, and Christine (Chad) Coatney of St. Claire Shores, MI; and 12 great-grandchildren: Brittney (Caleb) Breakey, Grace Jones, Emily Jones, Matthew Jones, Tim Jones, Michaela Gomes, Kaitlyn Gomes, Andrew Gomes, Anna Hallgren, Josephine Hallgren, Theo Coatney, and Rachel Coatney.

Irene's graveside service will be held on Friday June 21, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. at Greenacres Memorial Park (5700 Northwest Dr. Ferndale, WA).

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the University of Washington Alzheimer's Research Center.

Tribute Wall

JS

“ I loved the time I spent with here in Texas and in Mena. She was an amazing person and an even better Aunt. Love and miss you, give Uncle Bill a big Semper Fi from me.

Jeffrey Spittler - March 01, 2025 at 12:00 AM

AD

“ Sorry to hear of your mothers passing. I have often thought of Irene with fond memories. I graduated from BHS in 1953 and went to work at the telephone company. We worked together for several years and had many laughs!! I was surprised to read about how similar our lives were. I also married a man that built houses and moved together to Arizona.
Cherish your memories of your Mother .May she rest in Peace.
with love Amy Duffield

Amy Duffield - May 26, 2019 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ Deepest sympathy from all the “Trodden/Lafond” Clan. We have wonderful memories of the Blair/Trodden’s on Cottonwood Ave in Bellingham, especially Christmas Eve’s in the 1950’s running between the two houses!
Our Mom, Alice Trodden Lafond, enjoyed a brief time with her dear old pal while at Highgate before we lost her. Love and prayers to you all, Jeanne Lafond Carroll

Jeanne Carroll - May 26, 2019 at 12:00 AM

MQ

“ *My amazing cousin, Irene, was a large part of my life growing up. Our mothers were sisters and we shared many good times. Including watching the men in the family build a house for Gramma Hall in Bridal Falls, BC. I treasure the memories of these times and the summers spent with her, Bill, Charlie and Sue at their house on Alderwood in Bellingham. Rest in peace, Irene. Your kindness and good humor will be missed by all who know & love you.*

Marion Quinlan - May 26, 2019 at 12:00 AM