

Hulda E. Goossen

April 6, 1921 - April 16, 2016

The Story of Hulda (Franz) Goossen

April 6, 1921--April 16, 2016

Hulda (Franz) Goossen was welcomed into her eternal home in heaven on April 16, 2016, by her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, along with many other family members and friends who have "gone before."



Born: April 6, 1921
Place of Birth: Marion County, KS
Death: April 16, 2016

Hulda Ella was born to Peter J. and Anna Franz on April 6, 1921, in rural Canton, Kansas. She was the youngest of seven children. She married Cornelius D. Goossen on June 2, 1942, after which they settled on a farm near Mingo, Kansas. Eight children were born to the union. She is loved and remembered well by her family: Vernon and Linda Goossen of Mingo, Kansas; Simon and Carolyn Goossen of Westminster, Colorado; Andrew and Sheryl Goossen of Pryor, Oklahoma; Harold and Priscilla of Lincoln, Nebraska; Othelia and Bernie Vacura of Oberlin, Kansas; Tim and Micki Goossen of Goodland, Kansas; Arleta Wiebe of Elbing, Kansas; and Erna Goossen of Norton, Kansas. Hulda was predeceased by her husband, a son-in-law, Kevin Wiebe, and a grandson, Scott Goossen. She leaves many who will remember her including 23 grandchildren, and their spouses, 44 great-grandchildren, and 2 step-great-great-grandchildren.

In her early years, Hulda lived with her family lived on a farm about five miles from Goessel, Kansas. The house had a kitchen built onto the back and behind the house there were also steps, which led down to the cellar. Hulda was told not to go down there, but curiosity got the best of her and she disobeyed, sneaking down to the forbidden underground storeroom. The complete darkness and dampness scared her so much that she never went down there again.

The Franz family attended the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church. Sometimes after church they sometimes went to

Grandpa and Grandma Schmidt's home for dinner. It was so much fun looking at the catalogs they had at their house. Hulda recalled the high shelves in her grandparent's home. Aunt Maria had to really stretch to reach them. Years later upon visiting the home as an adult, she realized the shelves were actually regular in height. Aunt Maria was short and, of course, Hulda had been just a child.

Hulda preferred outdoor chores more than the indoor domestic ones, so sisters Bertha, Katherine and Anna Ruth helped their mother with the housework while Hulda helped her father and brothers, Jacob and Peter, with the outside work. She fed the chickens and gave the calves milk from a bucket. As she grew she took on the responsibility of milking ten cows. When she would go for the cows in the evening, she took the dog, Bobby, with her. He would help her round them up.

A few months after her sister, Bertha, married Alvin Goossen and moved to Thomas County in western Kansas, Hulda's parents decided they would also move there. They purchased a 300-acre farm one-half miles west of Mingo, Kansas. Hulda was nine years old.

Hulda loved school and geography was her favorite subject. Although the class was taught in English, all the children spoke German. If they had a question, they asked it in German. German was all that was ever heard on the playground at recess. She finished her early education, completing eighth grade at the Mingo Country School. She was kept busy with schoolwork and chores at home. Hulda also enjoyed sewing and sometimes she found time and scraps of cloth to sew clothes for her niece Susy's doll.

Hulda professed her faith in Jesus at an early age during daily vacation Bible school. When she told her father about it, he said that she was too young and did not understand. He thought she was just missing her mother who was away from home tending

her daughter who had just had a baby. Years later after her marriage, Hulda was listening to the Back to the Bible Broadcast on the radio while ironing clothes. God spoke to her heart and she reaffirmed her faith in Christ for her eternal salvation. As an adult, she became a member of the Meadow Mennonite Church in Mingo.

During the Great Depression of the 1930's, the Franz family considered a meal with meat a very special treat. Hulda's father butchered for people and they would sometime give him pieces that they did not care for, such as the tongue and the tails. Her mother made a delicious oxtail soup. In order not to spend money on gasoline, her father removed the engine from his vehicle and hitched the horses to it, drawing the reins through an opening. In this way the family could have the comfort of an enclosed vehicle without the expense of gasoline and engine repairs.

A three-day blizzard in 1933 left the Mingo area residents snowbound for over two weeks. Snow had drifted up to the barn roof on the Franz farm. Brother Pete and Hulda dug a tunnel through the snow from the house to the barn.

Then there was the Dust Bowl, which plagued the Midwest. While the family ate their meals, they would cover their plates with newspaper, only lifting it long enough to sneak a bite and then return it to its place where it protected their food from the gritty dust. In an effort to prevent the dust from entering the house, they would wet rags and put them in the windows.

Cornelius Goossen was from the same community as the Franz family when they lived in the Goessel community. His adopted sister, Hilda, was Hulda's special friend. She tried to encourage him to date Hulda. His brother, Alvin, had married Hulda's sister, Bertha. One Christmas, Corny visited his brother Heinrich and his wife, Martha in western Kansas. He attended a Christmas program in which Hulda gave a recitation. "Some of us may not

be here when Christmas comes again," she quoted. The idea of the recitation was that opportunities must be taken in the moment, because they may never happen again. Cornelius decided he had better not let the opportunity of seeing Hulda go by.

Several weeks after Christmas, a storm hit western Kansas, burying the countryside in deep snow. One day Peter came running into the Franz home. "Someone is coming to see you," he announced to his sister. "That's impossible," was Hulda's response. "The snow is too deep. No vehicle could get through." But it was true. Cornelius had trudged two and a half miles through deep snow to see Hulda. Much of their courtship was done by mail, but occasionally Cornelius would make the trip west for a personal visit.

On June 2, 1942, they were married in the Meadow Mennonite Church (now the Mingo Bible Church), which at that time met in a school house moved onto the church property in Mingo. It was the first wedding celebrated in the church building. The whole church was in attendance, as well as the groom's parents. Their honeymoon trip was Hulda's move to eastern Kansas. Cornelius loaded his bride's belongings into his father's Model T dump truck. They moved onto the Goossen family farm and lived in an upstairs bedroom, sharing the house with his parents.

Later they moved to a farm 5 miles south and 1/2 mile east of Mingo, Kansas. The Lord blessed them with eight children (Vernon, Simon, the twins Andrew and Harold, Othelia, Timothy, Arleta and Erna) and a debt-free farm. A series of accidents served to draw them closer to the Lord. Cornelius and Hulda were very missionary minded. They gave generously to the Lord's work and often had missionaries in their home. Hulda did not prize possessions over people, but the remembrances and souvenirs that missionaries gave them had great meaning for her.

Cornelius was diagnosed with cancer and after battling it for

three years, he entered the presence of the Lord on November 3, 1959. Bravely, Hulda maintained the family while her two oldest sons shouldered the responsibility of the wheat farm, often missing school to carry out the work. Even with all the work to accomplish, Hulda found time to enjoy life. Sometimes the boys started a baseball game in the yard. She would come up to bat and crack one clear out into the field, all the runners would move forward, and it was a win. Her children all thought she was the best, most fun-loving mom ever! She could cook like none other, but the food always disappeared too fast. Then it was time to wash up and start the next round.

A large part of Mom's life and responsibilities revolved around her youngest daughter, Erna, who is mentally and physically disabled. She loved Erna dearly and was incredibly proud of her accomplishments, and even though Erna lived in Winfield and then later in Norton, Kansas, she was always concerned that her daughter knew of her mother's love.

Five years after her husband's death, Hulda decided to move to a home in Colby. There she found work as a nurse's aide at the Good Samaritan Center, and later became the head baker at Colby Elementary School. Even though it was hard work, she enjoyed baking bread for all the school children. For several summers she served as the head cook during the summer at Maranatha Bible Camp near McCook, Nebraska. She was known for making delicious caramel pecan cinnamon rolls, and often shared them with the staff at the KGCR radio station.

In 1969, Hulda went back to school by taking GED classes and then went on to complete 33 hours at Colby Community College. She was proud that she could "hold her own" with the "youngsters" in her classes. She felt that her example was important to her children.

Eventually she became a professional seamstress, doing sewing and alterations for numerous customers. She also worked in the

fabric department at Walmart. Hulda also found time to volunteer her time in order to help others. When the children were in grade school and high school, she taught Good News Clubs in Oakley. Hulda also helped found and enjoyed working at the U-Save Shop, a used clothing store that contributed their proceeds to the ARC (Association for Retarded Children) to benefit retarded children.

Hulda always had a smile on her face and a positive attitude, even when life brought her numerous difficulties. When her burdens here on earth were the heaviest, Hulda would often be humming and singing to lighten the load. She knew the words to every hymn and she enjoyed lifting her voice in praise to God. She enjoyed waking in the early hours and spending time in the Word with a cup of coffee in hand. She took the responsibility of making sure that all of her children went to church regularly and studied the Bible.

During her last years on earth, she resided at the Prairie Senior Living Complex where she received good care. Whenever her family visited her, Hulda was sure to repeat numerous times, "I like it here." She was content to be wherever she was and found joy in little things. This was such an encouragement to her family.

Although we, her family, will miss her, we rejoice today because she has fulfilled her service on earth and has now heard her Father's words, "Well done, my child. Welcome Home."