



Sophie K. Ohlsson

March 23, 2005

The church bells of Stadtkirche in Bad Hersfeld, Germany marked many of the significant events in the life of longtime Plymouth and Detroit resident Sophie Katharina Ohlsson. She died of pneumonia Wednesday at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ypsilanti. She was 80. Her family played recordings of the bells for her while she was in the hospital. Born in Bad Hersfeld in 1924, Mrs. Ohlsson grew up in Nazi Germany, where food shortages, Allied bombings and air raid sirens were a way of life. She lost her older brother in the war and survived two major tragedies - a near fatal bout of diphtheria and a train bombing. As a young girl, she had hoped to go to college and study law, but the war changed that. Fortunately, the war also brought her a husband. During the US occupation, a telephone lineman, Detroit GI William Ohlsson, persuaded his landlady to invite the attractive Sophie Gerwig to dinner so he could meet her. Their courtship led to a near 59 year marriage. The church bells at Stadtkirche pealed after their wedding on July 3, 1946. Later, their son Bill Jr, and daughter Heidi, were baptized at the same church. As an adult, Bill Sr. climbed the Stadtkirche tower to record the bells. From that time forward, the church bells became a family tradition that would be heard on holidays, family celebrations and every Sunday morning. The family came to the United States in 1948 aboard the Queen Elizabeth I and bought a house on Detroit's west side, where Mrs. Ohlsson soon learned that being a German war bride was not easy in a country that had just defeated the Nazis. She taught herself English by watching "Lady of Charm" on television, and would welcome new

neighbors with freshly baked pastries. She was active in her children's school and was a longtime member of the choir at Evergreen Lutheran Church in Detroit. "She always took great pride in being a wife and mother. She always made a special effort to help people less fortunate than she was, and never did anything by half measures," said Heidi Schacher, her daughter. Mrs. Ohlsson and her husband moved to Plymouth in 1981. Bill owned Plasteel Corp in Inkster. In addition to her husband, son and daughter, she is survived by seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Visitation will be Friday 2 - 9 PM at Vermeulen Funeral Home, 46401 West Ann Arbor Road, (between Sheldon and Beck) Plymouth. Funeral Service is 11 AM Saturday. Interment is at Glen Eden Memorial Park, 35667 West 8 Mile Road, Livonia. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis TN 38105. To leave a message of condolence for the family, click on the Online Condolences link on this page.

Tribute Wall



“ *Sophie K. Ohlsson*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *Dear Heidi, Ron, Erika, Nick, Monika, Sam & Family,
We love you very much. We're all thinking about you and sending
our blessings your way. We hope that the pain passes quickly and
your fond memories fill your heart.
Much love, Erin & the Farrar-Dunbar's*

Farrar-Dunbar Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM



“ *Dear Ron & Heidi, We read that your Mom had passed, Heidi. Marty
& I would like to extend our condolences to you and Ron and your
entire family. I can say that we truly know the pain of what you are
going through since both of Marty's parents have died in the past
year, his Dad only 2 months ago. We're thinking of you. Our phone
is the same 248-851-9757, if you'd like to call and obviously you
have our e-mail. Take Care, Love, Mollene & Marty*

Mollene & Marty - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM



“ *Dear Heidi, Ron, and family,
We are so saddened to hear of the passing of your mom. There is
no greater love than that of a mother!!! She will truly be missed. All
of you are in our thoughts and prayers.
With condolences and love, Tom and Cindy*

Tom and Cindy Panackia - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

MJ

“ Heidi, Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. May your saddnes pass quickly, and the wonderful memories last for ever. Mike and Judy.

Mike and Judy - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

ES

“ DEAREST BILL AND FAMILY, ED AND I SEND OUR VERY BEST WISHES FOR PEACE OF MIND FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY. OMA WAS AN ANGEL BEFORE, AND NOW SHE IS WITH GOD AND HER FAMILY UP IN HEAVEN. LOVE YOU.

ED & CONNIE SCHACHER - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

TF

“ Our Love and Thoughts are with the entire family of Sophie Ohlsson. She was a beautiful woman who was admired by all who knew her.

The Carl Koenig Family - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

JW

“ Dear Uncle Ron, Aunt Heidi, Bill and Family,

Sophie was a beautiful lady inside and out. She will be truly missed. Our sympathys and prayers will be with you.

All our love,

Jerry, Jenni, Wesley and Wade

Jerry, Jenni, Wesley and Wade - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

RM

“ Dear Heidi and Ron,

What a beautiful mother. We are devastated she could no longer be with you. Our love and prayers are with you as you make your way through this very difficult time. Please be safe. We love you so much and miss you.

Robert and Meredith Mata - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

BC

“ Dear Bill and family, our sincere sympathy. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Don and Bobbie

Bobbie Crowther - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

AE

“ Dear Family,

We love you and our hearts are feeling your loss, we are with you in prayer. Sophie was a great example to follow as a wife, mother, grandmother and friend. May each of us try as hard with our own lives to be right with each other.

Our love and prayers are with you all.

*Love,
Aunite Cheri & Uncle Rick*

Aunite Cheri & Uncle Rick Egan - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM

MK

“ Mrs. Ohlsson was a very special lady. I will always think of her fondly and remeber all of the fun we had at your cottage. She was a kind, strong, beautiful woman. We were all lucky to have had her in our lives. She has left a wonderful legacy.

Mary Ann Kregel - December 12, 2014 at 10:35 AM