



## Arlys M. Torrey

March 3, 1928 - August 20, 2019

Arlys M. Torrey, 91, of Kearney, passed away Tuesday, August 20, 2019. Visitation will be from 5 to 7 p.m., Sunday, at O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Home in Kearney, and funeral services will be at 1 p.m. on Monday, August 26, at the Kearney Evangelical Free Church with Pastor Jordan Hinrichsen officiating. Interment will follow at Kearney Cemetery.

Memorials are suggested to the Kearney Evangelical Free Church. Condolences may be shared online at [www.osrfh.com](http://www.osrfh.com).

Arlys Marie (Saathoff) Torrey was born on March 3, 1928, the second of three daughters of John "Ehden" and Bernice (Summerville) Saathoff, on their farm between Miller and Sumner, Nebraska, in Dawson County. She departed this life on Tuesday, August 20, 2019, at the Kearney Regional Medical Center in Kearney, Nebraska. Her age was 91 years, 5 months and 17 days.

Arlys attended Miller Public School in Buffalo County, Nebraska, and graduated with the class of 1945. That summer, Arlys and her future sister-in-law, Dorothy Torrey, went to Denver to help with the war effort at the Remington Arms Company, which manufactured military ammunition. Arlys worked there as a secretary until World War II ended and she returned to Kearney. Upon completion of the Fall 1945 semester at the Kearney State

Teachers College, Arlys was offered a teaching position at Cottonwood Rural School District #43, near Odessa, where she taught from January 1946 to 1948.

On December 21, 1947, Arlys was united in marriage to Lewis John Torrey, by Rev. W. C. Rishel at the First Christian Church in Kearney, Nebraska. To this union four children were born: twins Kay "Katie" Marie and Keith Lewis, Barbara Louise, and Douglas Lynn. The family resided near Odessa, on the Murl Patterson farm where Lewis was farm manager. In 1950 they moved to a rented farm between Miller and Sumner. In addition to the Cottonwood school, Arlys taught at the Trapper's Grove Rural School District #16 in 1950, the Lone Star Rural School District in 1951 and 1952, and the Wild Horse Rural School District northwest of Miller from 1952 through 1954, as well as a few other rural schools. She was proud of having established the first hot lunch program in a rural school in the state of Nebraska. The family resided northwest of Miller, on the Dude Holliday farm, from 1953 until 1956, when they purchased the Bert and Ida Torrey farmstead near Miller, in Dawson County. During this time, Arlys enjoyed serving her many customers as an Avon representative. In 2010, the Torrey family was recognized with an Aksarben Pioneer Farm Award for owning the Torrey farm for 100 years. Lewis and Arlys made their home here from 1956 until 1964, when they moved to Elm Creek, Nebraska, because wintry weather made it difficult for the children to get from the farm to school.

In 1964 Arlys accepted a secretarial position in the Buffalo County District Court in Kearney. She later became a case worker for the Buffalo County Department of Social Services, and was appointed Director of Welfare for Buffalo County in 1968. In 1971, Lewis and Arlys moved to Kearney. While working full-time, Arlys earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in education in 1968, and a Master's of Science Degree in School Administration in 1974. During her tenure with county government, she served as an officer for the

Nebraska Association of County Officials, the Central Nebraska County Director's Association, and Kearney Business and Professional Women, as well as serving on several government task forces, committees, and advisory boards.

In 1957 when evangelist Homer Britton preached at the Evangelical Free Church in Sumner, Arlys and Lewis accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, and they were both later baptized. Church affiliations included the Regular Baptist Church of Kearney, the Kearney Evangelical Free Church and First Baptist Church, all of Kearney. Lewis and Arlys were lifelong members of the Republican Party and both served as delegates and campaigned for Presidential candidates Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. After retiring, Arlys served her community as a Red Cross volunteer, President of the Buffalo County Republican Women, and member of the Good Samaritan Hospital League, Buffalo County Women's Club, and University Women.

Arlys and Lewis enjoyed traveling on senior bus and Amtrak tours. Daughter, Barbara, and her husband took them along on trips to Arizona, California, Minnesota, and South Dakota, as well as to Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Austria, Finland, and the Caribbean. Arlys liked to stay active, swimming, water skiing, gardening, and spending time with her children. Music was a favorite pastime throughout Arlys's life. She played the piano for weddings, funerals, church services, nursing homes, and special programs. Arlys composed "The Nebraska Hymn" in 1967 for Nebraska's centennial, including publishing the sheet music and cutting a record accompanying a trio of singers which included Arlys's daughter, Katie. At age 90, Arlys was featured playing "The Nebraska Hymn" in a television news story.

Arlys's husband, Lewis, passed away in November of 2011. Two years later,

Arlys relocated to Brookdale Assisted Living in Kearney, where she continued to play piano for chapel services and parties. She very much enjoyed the friendships she made and rekindled there, as well as getting to spend more time with her sister, Betty.

In addition to her beloved husband, Arlys was preceded in death by her parents, Ehden and Bernice Saathoff; sister, Dorothy (Saathoff) Cherry; her sister-in-law, Dorothy (Torrey) Abels and husband, Harland; her brother-in-law, Harvey Henning; and her grandson, Jon Jackson, wife Christie, and their son Kobie.

She is survived by her son, Keith Torrey and wife, Toni (Holt) of Lincoln, Nebraska; daughter, Katie (Torrey) Johnson and husband, Dan, of Omaha, Nebraska; daughter, Barbara (Torrey) Clegg and husband Stephen, of Lincoln, Nebraska; and son, Doug Torrey of Kearney, Nebraska; sister, Betty (Saathoff) Henning of Kearney; and brother-in-law, Jack Cherry of Omaha; along with ten grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

# Cemetery Details

## Kearney Cemetery

4400 Avenue I  
Kearney, NE 68847  
(308) 233-3244

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**AUG 25.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral Homes and Cremations  
4115 Ave N  
Kearney, NE 68847  
(308) 234-3500  
info@osrfh.com  
<https://www.osrfh.com>

## Funeral Service

**AUG 26.** 1:00 PM (CT)

Kearney E-Free Church  
4010 7th Ave  
Kearney, NE 68845  
<http://www.kearneyefree.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ Arlys M. Torrey

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ I was so sorry to hear she passed. I will miss waiting on her at Goodwill, we always shared a laugh. Arlys may you rest in peace with the Lord and your family that you reunited with.

Carolyn - September 01, 2019 at 05:12 PM



“ Keith and Toni,  
We have been gone to Chicago so didn't hear about your Mother's passing. So sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Our deepest sympathy, Jim and Cathy Stone

cathy stone - August 29, 2019 at 04:25 PM



“ SO SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS. WAS SO GLAD THAT I GOT TO VISIT WITH HER AND DOUG ON THE 4TH OF JULY IN SUMNER. HAVE VERY FOND MEMORIES WHEN YOU LIVED IN ELM CREEK. LYNDA BURMAN

LYNDA BURMAN - August 29, 2019 at 02:48 PM

MS

“ Keith and families,

*So sorry to hear of your Mother passing. We won't be able to make it to the funeral but wanted you to know we are thinking of you. I remember when your family lived across the street from the school house at Elm creek. That has been so many years ago.*

*Our Condolences,*

*Lynn and Mary Swartwood*

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**Mary Swartwood** - August 27, 2019 at 02:45 PM

LS

“ *To the family of Keith & Toni Torrey:  
Sending our deepest sympathy in the loss of Keith's mother. Your family is in our thoughts and prayers!  
Linda & Ray Schluntz*

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**Linda Schluntz** - August 24, 2019 at 05:50 PM

GS

“ *Gordon & Judy Saathoff purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Arlys M. Torrey.*



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**Gordon & Judy Saathoff** - August 23, 2019 at 02:26 PM

HP

“ *Helen Van Patterson Patton lit a candle in memory of Arlys M. Torrey*



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**Helen van Patterson Patton** - August 22, 2019 at 10:40 PM

CS

“ *Sorry to hear of Arlys' passing. She was dear lady and friend, though we didn't see each other much anymore. She's now with the Lord she served.  
May you know God's comfort and peace.*

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**Carolyn R Scheidies** - August 22, 2019 at 07:20 PM

KH

“ *Arlys was always so kind to us and she always had a big smile for everyone. She always made us feel welcome. The world's loss is heaven's gain and we will always cherish memories we have with her from our time serving at First Baptist Church.  
Pastor Kevin and Vicki Holloway*

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**Kevin and Vicki Holloway** - August 22, 2019 at 05:45 PM

TR

“ *Troy Richardson lit a candle in memory of Arlys M. Torrey*



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**Troy Richardson** - August 22, 2019 at 02:35 PM

TR

“ Keith & Family:

*I am sorry to hear about your mother's passing. You are all in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.*

*Troy & Sandra Richardson  
Tempe, Arizona*

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**Troy Richardson** - August 22, 2019 at 02:35 PM