WOOD DONNA WOOLF
1909-

Donna Woolf, the 8th and last child of Homer and Loila Bates Woolf, was born 15 May 1909, at their home in Cardston, Alberta, Canada. Her mother was 46 years old at the time of Donna’s birth. Donna’s father Homer Woolf, was born 12 Oct 1855, in Nephi, Utah, the son of John Anthony Woolf and Sarah Ann DeVoe. Her mother, Loila Bates Woolf, was born 8 Aug. 1863, in Batesville, Utah, the daughter of Ormus Eaton Bates and Sarah Hymas.

Donna is the youngest child of the 3rd generation of the John Anthony and Sarah Ann Woolf family. Her grandfather, John Anthony Woolf, was born in 1805, over a century before her birth. These grandparents were close friends of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Her grandfather and the prophet used to race their horses together. It was a great privilege for them when the prophet visited in their home.

When Donna was born, a late spring blizzard also arrived. Her brother, Andrew, had to go 10 miles out to the farm on horseback to get her father. He has always had fun reminding Donna of his sacrifice for her. When he stayed to finish the chores for his father, he could not get back to Cardston because of the storm, and had to spend the next 3 days living in the farm cabin where the only food was mush.

There were many good times during Donna’s childhood. The family lived in the little cabin on the farm during the summers. Donna remembers picking wild strawberries and mushrooms in the hills behind the house. The pigweed grew so tall that the children could pull out large square areas of it to make the rooms of an elegant playhouse. They made “quite the houses.” Then there was always swimming in Lee’s Creek or winter sledding down the big hill that is now part of Main Street in Cardston. Donna had a lot of fun with her nieces and nephews, who spent many years in her family’s home.

As a little girl, Donna’s greatest love was cocoa, and this was the first word that she could spell.

Their families used to harness the teams and load wagons and the packhorses and go to the head of the Belly River to camp for about 2 weeks each summer. This favorite spot is just behind Old Chief Mountain. Donna’s mother loved life and fun as much as Donna does. When the men were off fishing, Loila sneaked off into the bushes. She dressed in some of the men’s bib overalls and pulled a big hat down to her eyes that were surely sparkling in anticipation. Then she used some of the moss from the trees to make an ugly beard and moustache. She headed up through the river towards camp. She was delighted with the effect her charade made on the women and children in camp when they saw this strange, ugly person coming towards them.

Donna’s father used to take her out riding on the horse with him to bring in the cows. He would sing songs like “Put on Your Old Gray Bonnet.” In his later years, he became blind and Donna read to him.

Donna started dating Dale Wood in high school in Cardston. He was a star basketball player with handsome red hair and she was a cute cheer leader with a pretty figure.

They enjoyed many parties at their own and friends’ homes. Donna loved dancing and singing. She used to sing in MIA contests. Sacrament meetings, conferences, funerals, at the hospital, and in operettas in Southern Alberta. Dale says that when he went on his mission to the Eastern States, he and Donna had an understanding, but it “didn’t crimp her style any.”
Donna married William Dale Wood in the Alberta Temple. They were married by his father, Pres. Edward James Wood, 28 Jan. 1932. After their marriage, they lived on the Wood farm in Glenwood, Alberta, where they spent their lives since that time.

Dale and Donna worked very hard and have had a successful farming business and a nice home. For many years, Donna cooked for up to 15 hired men. Pres. Wood brought many general authorities to the farm, where Donna was privileged to serve them lunch.

Their children are: Lowell Dale, Rex Woolf, Deanna, Karen, Judith Fay, and Edward Gregory. They have all been married in the temple and are active in their wards and stakes.

After her 1st two children, Donna was stricken with Bright’s disease. Her doctors told her that she could never have any more children; that she could maybe darn a few socks or sit and dry a few dishes, and that she would not live for more than one year. After fasting and prayer, the family went to the temple. While there, Pres. Edward J. Wood gave her a blessing. Donna recovered completely and returned to her busy farm life that summer.

Life on the farm has given Donna several frightening moments. One day, 2 Indian men decided that Dale had not paid them enough money, so they started to fight with him. When one of them picked up a 2 foot by 4 foot board and raised it to strike, Donna’s anger was kindled and she headed out the door with her frying pan in hand to defend her husband. Her courageous efforts turned the tide.

Donna has taught in Sunday School, Primary, MIA, and Relief Society. She served in the Presidency of the MIA and as president of Relief Society for 4 years. She is always very humble about her own abilities and good knowledge of the scriptures, but she has been a strong influence for good in the lives of many people. She supported her husband through many years of service in the Bishopric, High Council, and as a temple worker. Donna has served as a temple worker since 1968.

Her love of people is returned by all who know her. Her life of dedication to the Lord and to her husband and family is an inspiration to her 6 children and 21 grandchildren.

Typed into the computer 29 Oct. 2002 Kathleen Jardine Woolf  Idaho Falls, Idaho
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