

Ramoth (Lowe) Burkhalter

The family celebrates the life of Ramoth Lowe Burkhalter who passed away, surrounded by her family, on August 14th, 2010 at the age of 86.

Ramoth Isabel Lowe Burkhalter was born on November 7, 1923 in Asheville, North Carolina, the daughter of Oscar and Mary Knox Lowe. With her brothers Reid, James, and Oscar Jr., she completed her schooling in Asheville.

She held many fond memories of those years, including leading the honor society, winning the Miss Asheville contest, and teaching swimming and diving in the summers.

Following her graduation from Lee Edwards High School, she completed two years of business administration at a junior college in Asheville, followed by two years at Wheaton College, in Wheaton, Illinois where she met Edward Burkhalter of Berne, Indiana. They were married on August 29, 1945 in Asheville.

Together they continued their studies for an additional year at Wheaton, where she completed a master's degree in Christian education. They then moved to New York City where he received his master's of divinity from New York Biblical Seminary and she developed her deep love of education while teaching kindergarten.

In November 1947, the couple and four-month-old daughter, Mary Kay, left the United States aboard the Queen Mary ocean liner for India, where they spent forty-two years. Five more children were born in India. All six completed their education at Woodstock School in the Himalayan foothills, where she was active in the hillside community.

They served in central India as Mennonite missionaries with Indian churches and communities in Korba, Saraipali, and Jagdeeshpur, forming many deep friendships. During her years of service, she sought to create opportunities for young leaders through informal and formal education, as well as offering dignity and life skills to young women through ASHA, ('hope') a sewing project she helped to found.

In 1989, the couple retired to Berne, where they found avenues for ministry and supportive bonds. Following his death in 1993, she continued to live in Berne until she moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2007 to be near her family, where she found a home at Bethany Covenant Village.

As a wise counselor, she crossed boundaries, befriending and drawing others into community.

She is survived by her six children and their families: Mary Kay (Jonathan Larson) of Atlanta, Georgia; Beth Ann (George Taylor) of Bridgewater, Virginia; John (Barbara) Burkhalter of Indianapolis; Joyce (Mike Flueckiger) of Atlanta, Georgia; Amy (Chris Bauer) of Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Sheryl (Vivek Gupta) of Chicago, Illinois.

She is also survived by her brother, Oscar Lowe Jr. of Scottsdale, Arizona. She will be greatly missed by her children, her brother, her nieces, her ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at the First Mennonite Church in Berne on Saturday, September 11 at 11:00 a.m.

Memorial gifts may be made to a scholarship fund for the training of women leaders in the Indian church or to a fund in support of South Asian immigrant women in America. The respective organizations are: the Mennonite Mission Network, c/o First Mennonite Church of Berne; or, Raksha (meaning "protection" in Hindi), at raksha.org

Contributed by Jim & Joy (no source listed)