

Martha A. (Harris) Gahman

By Ellen Parrish

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Martha A. Gahman was born on March 19, 1927 in Craigville, Wells County Indiana to Beulah and Carl Harris. Martha's childhood was very strict and hard. Her family took dress codes and religion extremely seriously, and she couldn't leave her home without putting her hair up in some elaborate fashion or wearing clothes that covered her elbows and knees.

However, later on into her teens, she would sing and pass out Bibles at Craigville United Brethren, where she met her future husband, Arthur Gahman. When they first met, Martha turned him down because he was "too old for her." Arthur would not take no for an answer, so one night he came to her dwelling and convinced Martha's mother to let him take Martha on a date. However, it was late and Martha had already prepared herself for bed, but her mother, Beulah, insisted that she go and take Velma, Martha's sister, as a chaperone. Arthur, Martha, and Velma then went together to the Dutch Mill to have a grand time. Martha and Arthur then married on October 29, 1946.

Martha was mainly a housewife, until she took her first job as a cook at the Meadowvale Care Center. Here she would work from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the afternoon. She held this job when all of her children had gotten up into middle school or higher in their education, and then she took a job as a cook at Richard's in Decatur, Indiana. Martha worked this job for over 15 years and attained a watch from Richard's for her achievement. She mainly worked in the kitchen, but was also well known for her salads and gravy that she would make for the salad bar. Martha would also help her husband Arthur with some of the farm work, but she would continually refuse to drive the tractor.

A few hardships that Martha faced during her life included once wanting to become a missionary with her husband, but the whole ordeal turned out to be a scam. Those who were offering safe passage for Martha and her husband to another country demanded a large sum of money, and so Martha was forced into selling her wedding

ring and other valuables. Finally when the time had come, those who took Martha and Arthur's belongings and money had vanished, leaving them in a slight state of poverty before being able to get back on their feet. Martha also faced health related hardships as she reached her later years by having a gallbladder infection, hysterectomy, and getting portions of her colon removed because of gangrene.

Although Martha faced these difficult times, she was well known in the community for her phenomenal singing voice, which was on the radio for a small period of time. She could also play the accordion and piano, which added to her musical talents. Martha also took a cake decorating class at Penny's, and would then make and decorate cakes for her relatives' weddings and graduations. She was also involved in the community by teaching Bible School and being a part of The Lady's Aid, which was a Bible study. Martha was also known for being extremely hospitable to anyone who would come into her home.

However, in her later years, Martha did take on many illnesses, and on the night of June 2, 2010 she passed away. Her children were able to say their last goodbyes before she died, and she is now buried in the Oakland Cemetery in Craigville, Indiana. She shares a headstone with her husband Arthur Gahman, who died the previous year.

Bibliography

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