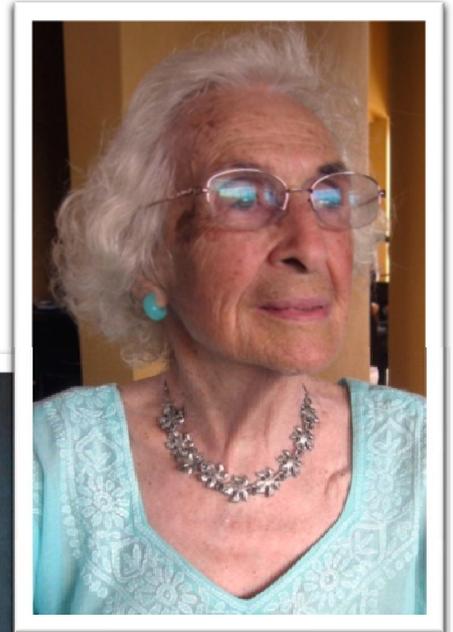


Dorothy "Dot" Steffee Roberts

March 3, 1917 – February 3, 2011



Dorothy was born to Harry and Greta (Clifford) Steffee toward the end of World War I, in Birmingham, Michigan. An active girl who enjoyed ice skating, skiing, and swimming, Dot was also a budding artist, studying painting at the Detroit Art Academy. Growing up during the Great Depression, Dot knew the value of hard work, and helped her family by getting jobs as a YMCA lifeguard, and as a doctor's assistant for several years.

In 1937, a young teacher named Homer Roberts was told by a mutual friend, "I know this keen girl named Dot", and a blind date was set up. From that first roller skating date, Dot and Homer knew that this promised to be a lifetime of togetherness. They were married in 1938, and went on to enjoy nearly 68 years as each other's best friend and lifelong love.

During World War II, with a young son at home being cared for by Greta, Dot felt a strong desire to contribute to the war effort. While Homer was teaching and acting as a neighborhood security warden, Dorothy went to work in a bomber plane assembly plant as a kind of "Rosie the Riveter", testing bomb-bay pressure control cylinders. She admittedly was one of the slowest workers, being "so concerned that a missed bubble by me might result in a fatal crash of one of our planes" that she did every test extra carefully. After the war, she was glad to return to her full time job of raising the six children that would eventually be born to the family.



It was also during the war that Dot and Homer began an adventure that would help shape their lives for the next 60-plus years. They both took positions at Mahn-Go-Tah-See, a YMCA camp located on the shores of Loon Lake near Hale, Michigan. Such was their love of the area that they eventually built their beloved home, Harvest Hill, on land adjacent to the camp. Homer ran the nature program, and Dot used her creative talents to preside over Handicrafts. Here she spent her summer days teaching campers to paint, mold clay, make cork kachinas, and most of all, to weave baskets. She could often be found sitting in a corner of the big room, a large tub of reeds soaking at her feet, and a group of eager young campers on either side as she patiently guided them in making the mats and baskets which they were so proud to take home to their parents. Along with the reed, Dot dispensed a generous amount of compassion, providing a sort of mother figure to the sometimes homesick campers. One of the greatest pleasures of Dot's life was teaching the skill of basket weaving to thousands of people, young and old, which she continued doing even into her nineties. She took great pride in the beautiful weavings she created, and her baskets continue to grace the homes of family and friends both near and far.

Dot was also very proud of her family, and that included all the roots and branches of the family tree. She researched, chronicled and connected with her heritage, including her pilgrim ancestors, who came from England to Dorchester Massachusetts in 1630 and made their way up the Connecticut River to help establish the first English settlement in Connecticut in 1635. Twice she made the pilgrimage to Windsor where she took great pride in being on the muster of the "Descendants of the Founders of Ancient Windsor". She was especially proud of her revolutionary war ancestor, Remembrance Filley, and later in her life became active in the DAR. Dot identified with the strong women of her family line, including Anna Gillett, Nancy Andress and Maria Prickett, whom she often brought to life through first person stories. But she was most proud of her own special branch, which included Homer and their six children, and the new branches that have continued to sprout from her great family tree.



Dorothy was preceded in death by her loving husband, Homer, in 2006. She is survived by Ron, Bob, Susan, Larry, Jerry, Nancy, and their spouses, and by a large and growing number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She firmly believed that love and family are the greatest treasures in life, and that one is never truly gone as long as they live on in the hearts of those who loved them. As such, we know that Dot and Homer will live on for a very long time, indeed.





*Over two, under one; over two, under one -- round, round beyond the beginning --
higher, higher -- spiral upon spiral -- building on work achieved, linked firmly to the past
-- upward, upward in the gracefully ordered cycle of the weaver.
Woven with love and the fibers of the land, your baskets have a place of honor
in each of our homes and your lessons are in the reeds.*

*What then has been the legacy of the weaver and the reeds?
By your guidance and example, you have helped us all to become weavers,
each in our own way. Our reeds are the abilities that we have in abundance, and skills
encouraged to develop to their potential. There has been freedom to try and to
sometimes fail and to try again, and so we have learned patience and persistence and
resilience. You have shown that skills freely shared are not diminished,
but in the sharing are strengthened and given new life. We have learned to build
upon what we have to weave our own patterns in the world.*

*You have been teacher, helper, advocate, patron, exactor of truth, guide,
historian, a link to the past, a goal for the future. You have shared our sorrows
and our triumphs and we have grown stronger for the sharing.
From the fiber of us all you have woven a family.*

(excerpts from a tribute written by Ron Roberts for Dot's 80th birthday)