

Ida Olsen Murphy Alice Olsen Jean Reeser

CALIFORNIA – Ida Olsen Murphy was born Dec. 12, 1888, in Avoca. She was raised and lived in Harlan, along with her nine siblings and parents who immigrated from Denmark in the late 1800's. After receiving her RN license in 1906, she owned and operated Harlan's first hospital on Farnam Street. She worked tirelessly for approximately 20 years to provide medical care to her community. In 1974, she left Harlan and moved to California to be with her daughter, Jean Reeser. She died May 23, 1991, at the age of 102 years, five months and 11 days.

Alice Etta Olsen was born March 6, 1911, and was raised in Harlan. She received her RN license from Bishop Clarkson Hospital in 1939. She was the youngest of 10 children and her sister, Ida, was the oldest child. She moved to Rock Island County, IL, where she worked for 22 years as a public health nurse. She was recognized for her "outstanding and devoted service to the cause of eradicating tuberculosis in Rock Island County." After retiring, she moved to California and lived in Sun City until her death April 5, 2003, at age 92 years and 30 days. She was an active member of the Sun City Lutheran Church.

Jean Reeser, daughter of Ida Olsen Murphy, was born in Omaha, NE, June 16, 1920. She was raised and attended school in Harlan. She graduated from the University of Southern California, earning her elementary and secondary teaching credentials. After teaching for 12 years, she was a social worker for Los Angeles for 14 years. Jean was an active member and frequent speaker for the Leisure World Democratic Club, Friends of the Library, Unitarian Fellowship, Orange County Congress of Seniors as well as the Leisure World's World Affairs Council. She held office as president and legislative chairwoman for the LW Democratic Club, and was honored in 1994 as Democrat of the year. Many newspaper articles championed her accomplishments. Jean died Aug. 22, 2003, at age 83 years, two months and six days. Jean desired her final resting place to be in Harlan, where she was raised and held fond memories.

Graveside services for Jean Reeser, Ida Olsen Murphy and Alice Olsen were held Oct. 4, 2003, at the Harlan Cemetery. Burmeister-Johannsen Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.