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Valley native celebrates 90th birthday

BY CYNTHIA NYE

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Saturday afternoon Lura Butler's 90th birthday was celebrated at the Juliaetta Community Church. Over 150 people signed the guest book. Lura had a wonderful time visiting with people, but didn't get a chance to talk with everybody. She was quite overwhelmed at the number of people that would turn out on a cold day for the event. However, she is a well known and deservedly well loved member of the community.

Her parents, Ed and Dixie Groseclose, came from Virginia to this valley. Lura was born on her Uncle Marion's homestead halfway between Arrow and Juliaetta.

This homestead was called the "Black Bear" Homestead. When the family had lived in Virginia, Marion had had a pet bear which he sold for \$15 before moving out here. That \$15 was then used to pay for his homestead which he then named in honor of his former pet.

Lura attended school in North Teakean through the fifth grade, then Agatha for two years and Arrow for a year before attending Juliaetta High School. She lived with her great aunt and uncle, Jim and Susan Groseclose during the school year. The school house burned down before she started high school, so the students were housed in various buildings around town. The high school met in what is now the Knotty Pine.

After graduation, she married Cliff Nelson, who bought the building. They had an apartment there and he ran his gas station with pumps and did mechanical repairs. They sold the building when they moved to Bovill for three years. When her husband died they had only three payments left on the building, now Granny's Pantry, where he had operated his business as a mechanic.

Lura managed to rent the building and make the payments while she had all the other things to deal with. She started working at Howell's Grocery Store where she was employed for years until it was sold. Then she worked for Noble's Grocery Store before retiring.

Over the years she kept scrapbooks filled with clippings from local papers about the lives of local friends and relatives. These go back many years and are interesting reading.


When Lura was first married there were several other ladies on her street who enjoyed quilting. Lura owned the clamps, and another lady owned the quilt frame. When somebody had a quilt ready to stitch, they would gather at that house and work on the quilt together. Some of these ladies were May Walsh, Ethel Nelson (her mother-in-law), Lily McKinley and Lily McCall. Lura has continued over the years making her beautiful hand stitched quilts, although she says that she is slower at making them now. Two of the quilts that she had made were on display at the birthday celebration. One was a crazy quilt with many different fabrics and embellished with embroidery. The other was a basket quilt.

Lura is associated with beautiful flower gardens in many people's minds. For years she maintained the banking below the Juliaetta Community Church so that it was always beautiful. She also fixed the flowers for the church for years. She would use her own flowers, plus what people donated from their gardens, and dried and wild plants. She used her excellent sense of color and design for the benefit of others.

Lura is still going strong, setting an example for the rest of us of the difference a quiet, loving Christian lady can make in the community. Here's hoping that she has many more years to be a light to the community.

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