



Dorothea Burgum Memorial Endowment

Dorothea (Church) Burgum was very impressed with the generosity of Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of Westfield. For many years, she faithfully attended our annual Awards Night and congratulated recipients. Dorothea never served on the board of CSF or attended any meetings, but she truly believed in its goals. She included a bequest in her will for a generous donation to Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of Westfield. She died in 1992, and the Dorothea Burgum Memorial Endowment was established in 1994.

Dorothea was born in Westfield in 1901. Family and friends called her "Dot," and she used this nickname throughout her life. She was a member of First Congregational Church in Westfield, and the Golden Chapter of the Eastern Star.

Dot was a traditional woman of her generation. She never got her driver's license, and she was a housewife nearly all of her adult life. Her husband, Thomas Burgum, worked for Westfield Gas & Electric Company while Dot took care of their home on Oak Terrace in Westfield. Like many women of that era, Dot did enter the work force during World War II. The United States needed her help, and she got a job at Westfield Manufacturing Co. because it was her patriotic duty. As soon as the war ended, Dot was a housewife once again.

Dot and Tom adopted a little girl, Elizabeth. They loved their daughter dearly and she was the only child they ever had. Sadly, Elizabeth was killed in a car accident when she was a young adult. Dot grieved for her daughter all her life. She very rarely spoke about Elizabeth because it was too painful.

It was difficult to rebuild their lives after this tragedy, but Dot and Tom found a way; they lived a quiet life and did everything together. On weekends, it became their custom to take a long drive on Sunday afternoons. Tom bought a little cottage in Montgomery and the two of them spent their summers there for many years. Dot loved dogs, and she and Tom had one that they adored. Occasionally they socialized with friends, but they spent the majority of their time with just each other.

After Dot lost her husband in 1984, she relied on friends to take her grocery shopping and do errands. She still led a quiet life, but Dot knew she wanted to leave a special legacy of her own. This Dorothea Burgum Memorial Scholarship is her legacy.

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