

**GRAVESIDE COMMITTAL SERVICE FOR  
ANNE K. LITTLE**



**BORN MAY 23, 1907  
GREENFIELD, MO**

**DIED JULY 13, 2005  
SPRINGFIELD, MO**

**COMMITTAL OF ASHES AUGUST 6, 2005  
GREENFIELD CEMETERY, GREENFIELD MO  
CELEBRANT STACY WILLHOIT OFFICIATING**

**ORDER OF SERVICE:**

**BLESSING  
STORY EULOGY  
BELL CEREMONY  
COMMITAL OF ASHES  
FAMILY BURIAL CEREMONY  
MUSIC TO CLOSE: AMAZING GRACE**

(Approx. 15 minutes total)

## BLESSING

### Celebrant:

We gather together today to commit Anne K. Little, "Aunt Anne", "Annie K", to her final resting place beside her husband and one true love, Paul R. Little. We gather to comfort each other in our grief and to honor the life Anne lead. A life that was full of hope, happiness, laughter, and love...through good times as well as in bad. This is the way we will always remember Anne...that she lived her life as an example to each and every person she met that love is an *action*, not just a feeling. And the practice of giving of ourselves is the truest way to honor God.

Anne, as we honor your memory and the love you leave behind, we offer your Spirit this traditional Irish blessing:

May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

And the rains fall soft upon your fields.

Until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His Hand.

## STORY EULOGY

Anne Kathryn Little was born on May 23, 1907 just 4 miles north of Greenfield to Bailey Morris and Margaret Elizabeth Howard. To this union were also born 6 more daughters—Gertrude, Emma, Corda, Mary, Bessie, and Frances—and 3 sons—Howard, Troy, and Boyd. Anne enjoyed life on the farm with her large family throughout her childhood...she often spoke fondly of her days there and was quick to tell you how much hard work was involved. Anne was able to visit her family homestead with her nephew Steve Brown, and his daughter Erin, earlier this year and it was a very special event for her as well as her family to see the farm once again. Anne attended Greenfield schools and graduated from Greenfield High School in 1925. Anne was very proud of the fact that her senior year she was an integral part of the girl's basketball team who won the state championship.

Anne married the love of her life, Paul R. Little, on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1928. They walked together through 37 years of marriage until Paul's death on October 7, 1965. Anne and Paul enjoyed each other's company immensely. They experienced many adventures together and witnessed many changes in the world. Some of their happiest times were as operators of Spring Creek Resort in Isabella, MO in the 50's and 60's. Here they enjoyed lake life and made many friends, including the Willhoit family who adopted Anne as their very own. When Paul became too ill and needed to be closer to medical care, Paul and Anne moved to Springfield where Anne continued working and making friends at Cranks Drug Store. After Paul's death, Anne spent another 40 years committed to their sacred union. Those who knew them and the depth of their love know without hesitation that Paul was waiting there on the other side to take Anne's hand the day she died.

Having been raised on the family farm, where life was hard, and having lived through the Great Depression, where life was even harder, Anne knew the value of a dollar and the importance of being frugal. Her life was never easy nor extravagant, yet Anne was rich in family and friends with whom she shared her life. Anne knew how to appreciate life and showed her love for living in everything she did, whether she was dancing to big band sounds, waving to WWII airman from the roof of her apartment building where she sunbathed, sharing a story or a laugh, shuffling and playing cards better than any Vegas dealer, attending numerous family birthday and graduation events, or enjoying a dry martini and a good cigar for her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday, Anne did everything with a humor and style that will never be forgotten.

Anne was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, all of her brothers and sisters, and many other family members and friends. She and Paul had no children together, yet Anne was many people's Aunt, Cousin, or special friend. She was as at ease with her own generation as she was with those five generations after her. And she treated everyone the same...with love and respect. This is why we have all come here today...to send Anne on her continuing journey surrounded by the love of her *family*.

## BELL CEREMONY

### Celebrant:

For centuries, the church has used the ringing of a bell to mark the passing of the Beloved and to sing God's praises in silent worship. I now ring this bell four times as we join in a silent prayer of thanksgiving for all God has gifted to us through her life. Anne, with the ringing of this bell, we bid you safe journey.

[Celebrant rings small hand bell]

## COMMITTAL OF ASHES

### Celebrant:

Anne believed in the sanctity of life and the inherent beauty of all God's creations on earth. She found solace in the gifts of the Earth and loved to give plants and flowers as gifts to others as her special way of honoring the Beauty of God's creation. As we lay Anne's ashes to final rest, I offer you this poem by Walter Rinder as a reminder of the beauty of Life and the solace we may find in these gifts as we grieve her death:

Finding You in Beauty

The rays of light filtered through

The sentinels of trees this morning.

I sat in the garden and contemplated.

The serenity and beauty

Of my feelings and surroundings

Completely captivated me.

I thought of you.

I discovered you tucked away  
In the shadows of the trees.  
Then, rediscovered you  
In the smiles of the flowers  
As the sun penetrated their petals  
In the rhythm of the leaves  
Falling in the garden  
In the freedom of the birds  
As they fly searching as you do.  
I'm very happy to have found you,  
Now you will never leave me  
For I will always find you in the beauty of life.

In honor of Anne's Presbetyrian heritage I will now recite this final prayer to consecrate her grave and commit her Spirit to everlasting life:

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to Almighty God: Anne K. Little. We commit her body to the ground; earth to earth; ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless her and keep her, the Lord maketh his face to shine upon her and be gracious unto her and give her peace. Amen.

## FAMILY BURIAL CEREMONY

### Celebrant:

As we hold Anne in our hearts and memories from this day forward, we commit ourselves to carrying Anne with us always. We honor her memory by the following promises: to treat our friends and family members the way that Anne did...with a caring heart and honest interaction; to move through life with a quick wit, generous laugh, and brilliant smile; and the commitment to holding our hearts open to allow others into our lives with the intention of creating and honoring the family of God.

### [Celebrant holds up the bowl of homestead earth]

To signify this promise to Anne we will now each take up a handful of earth to place upon her grave. We begin with a portion of earth that comes from a very special place to Anne—her family homestead here in Greenfield where she grew up with her large farming family---with the intention that by laying this earth closest to her, her Spirit will be surrounded forevermore with all the love, happiness, and wonderment she felt there as a child.

I ask all who wish to, to now to come forward and take this soil in your hand and bless Anne's final resting place here beside her husband, Paul. If any of you have final words for Anne, please feel free to share them from your heart at her graveside. I only ask you to be mindful of the heat and the comfort of the other people here with you.

[Each person who wishes to come forward in turn takes a small amount of soil from the bowl and blesses Anne's grave]

### Celebrant:

Having committed Anne's Spirit to eternal rest and blessed Anne's grave with the joy and comfort of her childhood home, we now say to Anne: "Thank you for all you have gifted to us in your long and loving life. What good you have shown us, we will show to others. We release you now to the next part of your spiritual journey as you walk hand in hand with your Creator. All those who have gone before you lighting your way."

At this time I will ask Mark to play a beautiful song for Anne, and I ask each of you to forever remember Anne as she was: always smiling!

[Music Cue: **Amazing Grace**, Mark Willhoit on harmonica]

The men (and any others who wish to participate) will now close up Anne's consecrated grave. Thank you all for coming.

**Here Ends the Ceremony, Here Begins Anne's New Life**