



## Shirley Coates

May 3, 1920 - June 29, 2017

PRINCETON — Shirley May Coates, 97, of Princeton passed away at Colonial Rehabilitation and Nursing Center under hospice care on Thursday, June 29, 2017.

Shirley was born May 3, 1920, near Princeton, the daughter of the late Orville and Gladys (Jackson) Cater. She married Robert Francis Headley Coates on Jan. 5, 1941. They celebrated nearly 55 years of marriage, until he preceded her in death in 1995.

She was also preceded in death by a son, Gary Coates of Princeton; two sisters, Caryl (Ned) Shettel of Princeton, and Alice Patricia (Leland) Butts of Rock Falls; two sisters-in-law, Elizabeth Coates of Neponset, and Jeanne (Cecil) Gunning of Neponset; and two nephews, Crayton Shettel of New York, and Norman (Helen) Shettel of New York.

Surviving Shirley are sons Michael (Lois Kabela) Coates of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; David (Barb Smith) Coates of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and daughter Sherrilyn Coates Roberts, of Petersburg; daughter-in-law, Bea Urquiza (Gary) Coates of Princeton; brother-in-law Thomas Coates of Kewanee; grandchildren Nicole Coates (Skipp) Schaeffbauer, Dr. Ryan Coates, Laurelyn Roberts, Michael (Kathrin Siegmund) Roberts, Matthew (Robynn Leidig) Roberts, Katie Coates (Mike) Selburg, Andy (Lacie Bray) Coates, Heidi

Roberts (Jeremy) Phillips, Kelsie Coates and Austin Coates; great-grandchildren Isabel Schaeftbauer, McKenna Schaeftbauer, Truitt Coates, Henry Selburg, Liah Roberts and Henry Phillips; nieces and nephews Connie Shettel (Jeff Beaulieu) Campbell, Nancy Shettel (Chris) Powell, Joann Butts (Peter) Gibson, Dan (Elissa) Gunning, Gregg (Paula) Gunning, Cliff (Dee) Gunning, Lee Butts, Larry Butts and Andy Tarentino.

Shirley attended a one room country school house through eighth grade, where she was one of two students in her class. She graduated from Princeton High School in 1938. After high school, Shirley worked in a drug store and later as a bookkeeper at a lumber company. Shirley and Bob lived on their grain and livestock farm two miles south of Neponset until 1962 when they moved to Princeton. After this move, Bob continued to manage the Neponset family farm. Care of the land was a high priority for Shirley.

While living in both Princeton and Neponset, Shirley focused on raising her four children and helping her husband with farming. She taught Sunday School, Bible School and helped organize a young adult Sunday School class at Neponset Methodist Church. She was a former member of the United Methodist Church of Princeton and Neponset. She was a member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church of Princeton and Esther Circle for over 50 years.

Shirley was a leader of the Neponset "Happy Helpers" Girls 4-H Club and assistant leader of the Neponset "Pioneers" Boys 4-H Club. She started the milk break program in Neponset grade school and an after school program that focused on adolescent issues for young teens. Shirley helped organize the PTA in Neponset and was a member of the Band Boosters. While in Neponset, Shirley sold World Book Encyclopedias. Later in Princeton, she was a nurse's aide at Perry Memorial Hospital. She also belonged to and was active in Home Extension for many years.

Shirley was a loving, generous, and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt and friend. Supporting and watching her children's and grandchildren's activities gave her much joy and pleasure. She cared about her community and fellow man and helping others. Most of her life was spent observing needs in the community and then helping those needs to be met. She was a constant and curious learner her whole life.

Shirley was among the original planners and organizers of Mobile Meals in Princeton and what became In-Home Care for Bureau County. She was director of Mobile Meals for its first 23 years. She served on the board, in the auxiliary, and on various committees for In-Home Care.

Shirley held many offices in Church Women United including president. Church Women United has many sponsored programs, including Mobile Meals, The Closet, and the International Thanksgiving Fellowship. Another community service in which Shirley volunteered was United Way of Bureau County, where she served as captain for several years.

A celebration of Shirley's life will be held at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Princeton at 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 3, 2017. Shirley has gifted her body to be used for science.

Norberg Memorial Home is handling these arrangements. In lieu of flowers, memorials in Shirley's name may be made to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church and Mobile Meals of Princeton.

Online condolences may be left at [www.norbergfh.com](http://www.norbergfh.com).

# Previous Events

## Service

SEP 3. 1:00 PM (CT)

St. Matthews Lutheran Church  
416 E. Dover Road  
Princeton, IL 61356

# Tribute Wall

MO

“ *My sympathy on the loss of your mother. May God and your memories give you comfort as you face your grief.*  
*Sincerely, Martha (Reed) Ouart*

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**Martha Ouart** - July 05, 2017 at 08:36 AM

CD

“ *Thinking of the family. Shirley was a lovely person - She was my Mom's table mate at Colonial Hall.*  
*She lived her earthly life well - Her heavenly life was well earned. ❤️*

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**Carolyn (Huffstodt) Dailey** - July 01, 2017 at 09:55 AM