

## FLOYD ERNEST NELSON

(Written text and photographs provided by Floyd C. Nelson Jr. and William John Krause II). **Floyd Ernest Nelson** was born on April 20, 1907, in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, and was the son of Nels Christ and Mary Elizabeth (Johannesson/Nelson) Nelson. As was part of the Swedish tradition of that time, Floyd was named after Floyd Lake which abutted the property of the family farm in Becker County, Minnesota. Floyd traveled with his parents to homestead in Montana when he was four years old. His parents homesteaded in the buggy creek community near the Tampico, Montana. Floyd grew up on the family farm and helped his parents and neighbors farm and ranch this area. In the early 1920's he traveled to Anaconda, Montana, and worked at the copper smelter in this mining community. Floyd's father, Nels Christ Nelson, died in 1927 and as a result Floyd returned to the homestead to help his mother and younger brothers farm and ranch. Floyd worked on the Fort Peck Dam project in 1933. He worked with a crew that cleared trees and brush from the site where the spillway was to be built. In addition, Floyd drove a truck hauling dirt in the construction of the spillway. He also was employed to build the grade for the railroad at that time. Floyd Ernest Nelson married **Bertha T. Stensland** on June 2, 1934, in Glasgow, Montana. Following their marriage they lived in the Highland Community, and their home was the former Highland School which was moved a quarter of a mile from its early-day location to the land that they farmed, ranched and owned. Bertha Stensland was born on July 15, 1911, and was the daughter (second child) of Elias and Anna (Olson) Stensland. She was born on the original homestead of the Stensland family in the Highland community. Mrs. Dickman was the attendant at her birth. Bertha attended Highland School through the eighth grade and graduated from Glasgow High School in 1930. Bertha Stensland was a lifelong member of the Highland Lutheran Church, where she was baptized and then confirmed on September 14, 1925. She was also a member of the First Lutheran Church of Glasgow, in Glasgow, Montana. Following graduation from high school Bertha Stensland completed Teacher's Training and became a rural school teacher. At that time teachers renewed their teaching certificates every two years by attending college for nine weeks during the summer months. Bertha attended college at Billings and Miles City, Montana. Bertha Stensland taught at Buggy Creek, Tampico, and Riverside Schools. Following her marriage to Floyd Ernest Nelson, Bertha was a substitute teacher at the Tampico School. Floyd Ernest and Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson had three children: **Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny)** born on January 27, 1935 in Tampico, Montana; **Beverly Ann Nelson** born on September 3, 1936 in Glasgow, Montana; and **Donald Bruce Nelson (Donny)** born on January 21, 1956, in Glasgow, Montana.

Bertha (Stensland) Nelson was very active in 4-H and was a leader of the Tampico Boy's 4-H Club for 43 years. On September 28, 1986, during 4-H Achievement Day, Bertha was honored for 40 years service as a veteran volunteer 4-H leader. She became a leader in the Tampico Boy's 4-H Club in 1946. At that time, there was a Tampico Boy's Club and a Tampico Girls' Club. The clubs were consolidated under the Tampico Boy's Club in 1949 and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson was the organizational leader. Her three children (Sonny, Beverly, and Donny) as well as her grandchildren that lived in the community, were all active 4-H members under her leadership. Bertha dedicated over 50 years of volunteer service to young people of the Tampico and Glasgow communities. She was honored by United States President, Ronald Regan, and the Governor of Montana, Ted Schwinden, as well as numerous other state and national officials for her leadership and volunteer service. Bertha was a member of the Hospital Guild in Glasgow and also was a Bible School teacher in Tampico during Bible study sessions given by the Lutheran Church of Glasgow.

Floyd enjoyed hunting, farming, and working with livestock. Floyd Ernest Nelson's brand was **HO—**. Floyd also enjoyed visiting with relatives and friends over a cup of coffee. Floyd Ernest Nelson died at his home in Tampico, Montana, on February 2, 1990. Burial was in the Highland Cemetery, in Glasgow, Montana. Following the death of her husband, Floyd, Bertha (Stensland) Nelson continued to live on the ranch in the Tampico area. She thoroughly enjoyed visiting with family, friends and company in general, and all could count on her for a hot cup of coffee and a home cooked meal. Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson died at the Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital on March 20, 2006. Bertha was 95 years old at the time of her death. Burial was in the Highland Cemetery, in Glasgow, Montana.



A photograph of Floyd Ernest and Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson. Taken from the Stensland Family Reunion Book 2000. Date of photograph thought to be 1934.





A photograph taken at the Stensland residence near Tampico, Montana, on Christmas day. Shown in back row from left to right: Agnes (Stensland) Molvig, Bertha (Stensland) Nelson, Anna (Olson) Stensland, Chris Molvig, Dorothy Ann Molvig, Elias Stensland. Front row left to right: Beverly Ann Nelson, Floyd Ernest Nelson, Carol Lee Molvig, and Alyce Mae Molvig. Date: early 1940s.



Bertha (Stensland) Nelson holding her first son, Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny), in a undated photograph. Place thought to be Glasgow, Montana. Date: about 1935.



The first two children of Floyd Ernest and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson: Beverly Ann Nelson and Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny). Place: Glasgow, Montana. Date: about 1941.





The family of Floyd Ernest and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson: daughter, Beverly Ann Nelson, is standing and son, Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny), is sitting in front between his parents. Place: Glasgow, Montana. Date: early 1940s.



The family of Floyd Ernest and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson. Shown are Beverly Ann Nelson, Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny), and Donald Bruce Nelson (Donny). Place: Glasgow, Montana. Date: about 1960.





The extended family of Floyd Ernest and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson. Back row left to right: Rollin Pederson, Jackee Nelson, Beverly Ann (Nelson) Pederson, Donald Bruce Nelson (Donny), and Deanna (O'Neil) Nelson. Front row left to right: William Floyd Pederson, Bertha (Stensland) Nelson, Sally Nelson, Floyd Ernest Nelson, and Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny) holding Gina Nelson. Place: Glasgow, Montana. Date: about 1963.

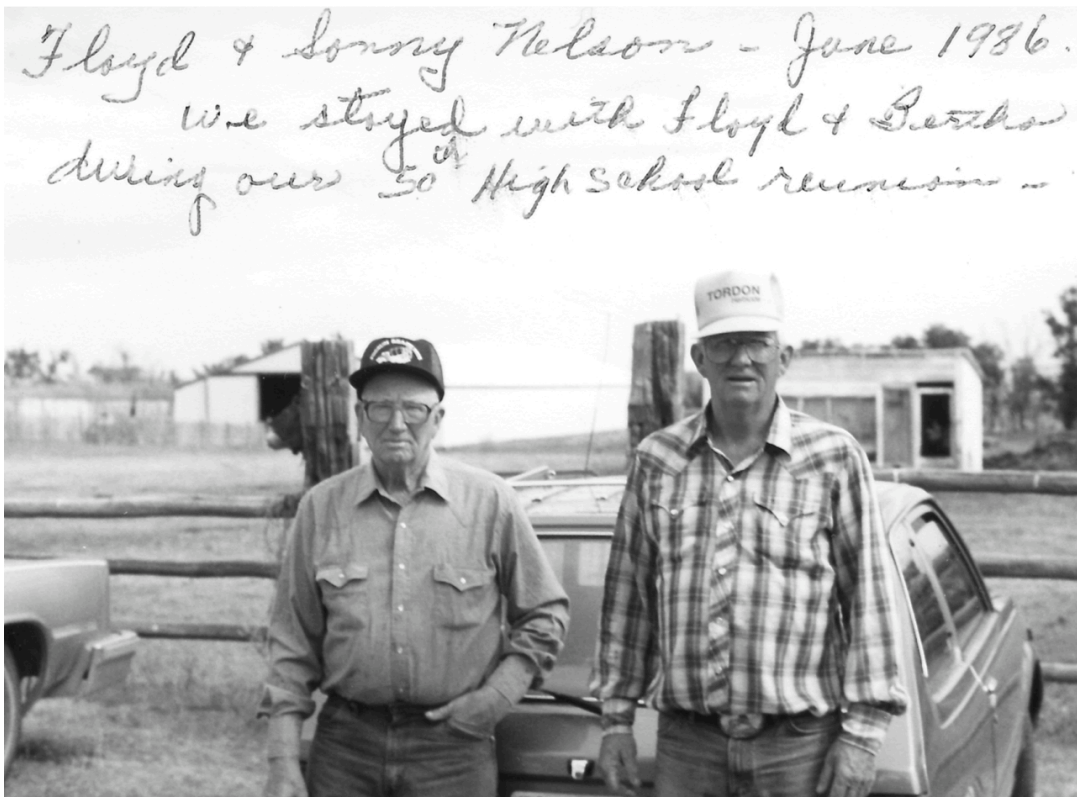


Floyd Ernest and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson photographed at their residence in the Highland Community near Tampico, Montana. Date: 1983.



Floyd Ernest and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson photographed at their residence in the Highland Community near Tampico, Montana. Date: 1986.





Floyd Ernest Nelson (left) and his eldest son, Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny), photographed at the homestead in the Highland Community near Tampico, Montana. Date: June, 1986.



Floyd Ernest Nelson (center) photographed with his two youngest sisters, Hazel Ruby (Nelson) Krause (left) and Lorraine Marion (Nelson) Bain, at the original homestead near Buggy Creek searching for memorabilia. Date: June, 1986.



Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson photographed with her two sons, Donald Bruce Nelson (Donny)(right) and Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny). Date: 2004.





Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson (third front right) photographed with her extended family. From right to left in front are: Jessica Rose Svien, Joe Svien, Arielle Svien, Bertha T. (Stensland) Nelson, Deanna (O'Neil) Nelson, Floyd C. Nelson Jr. (Sonny). Standing in back from left to right are: Joseph Nelson Svien, Jackee (Nelson) Svien, Arielle Jean Svien, Ron Svien, Theresa Nelson, Donald Bruce Nelson (Donny), Rose Mary Reyling, Joseph Reyling, Gina (Nelson) Reyling holding Michael Nelson Reyling, JoLynn Marie Reyling, Sally (Nelson) Irwin, and Bob Irwin.

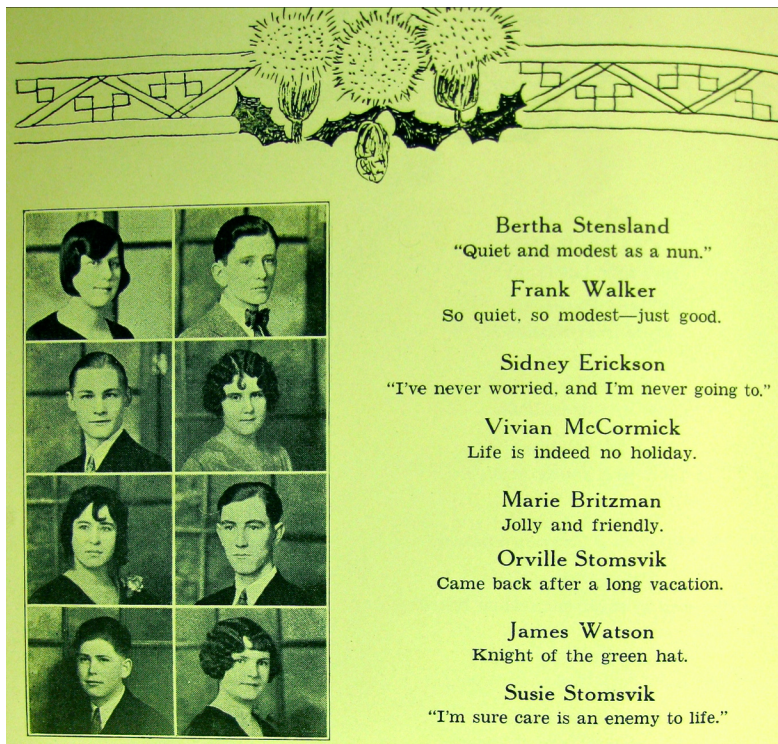
## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS



A photograph of the first confirmation class of the Highland Lutheran Church. Bertha Stensland is the first woman on the right. Her sister, Agnes Stensland, is standing third from the right. Date: September 14, 1925. (Courtesy of the Valley County Historical Society, Glasgow, Montana.)

First Confirmation Class Highland Lutheran Church September 14, 1925  
 Rev. A.N. Livdahl, Ingvar Barstad, Anne Barstad (Swenson), Agner Stensland (Molvig),  
 Ida Disrud (Mortenson), Bertha Stensland (Nelson)  
 Ingvar and Anne were confirmed in the Norwegian language  
 Anges, Bertha and Ida were confirmed in English





Bertha Stensland  
 "Quiet and modest as a nun."

Frank Walker  
 So quiet, so modest—just good.

Sidney Erickson  
 "I've never worried, and I'm never going to."

Vivian McCormick  
 Life is indeed no holiday.

Marie Britzman  
 Jolly and friendly.  
 Orville Stomsvik  
 Came back after a long vacation.

James Watson  
 Knight of the green hat.

Susie Stomsvik  
 "I'm sure care is an enemy to life."

A high school graduation photograph of Bertha Stensland taken from the Glasgow High School Yearbook of 1930. (Courtesy of the Valley County Historical Society, Glasgow, Montana.)

## MSU-B and Normal School--Two Different Schools During Two Different Times

**Amy Whittle**  
**Advertising Manager**

Did you ever wonder what college for education students was like 72 years ago and how it compares to the same major now? A few weeks ago, I had the privilege of visiting with an amazing woman named Bertha Nelson. She had attended college here 72 years ago.

During our visit, I asked her many questions about the Normal School and I was amazed at the differences.

One of the major differences is how to travel from our hometown of Glasgow, Montana to Billings. For me, it is a simple four to five hour drive on a two lane highway. Not too exciting! But for Bertha it was quite an adventure. The trip involved travel in her father's Model T and crossing a river on a ferry capable of moving automobiles and horses. The roads were

mostly gravel or dirt. She remembered it being a long, bumpy trip.

Bertha and other girls from her area resided in a house on Avenue B that still stands today. In 1932, there was no actual campus and therefore no dorm to live in. Her education classes were in a building that was located near the Yellowstone County Courthouse. Today, I am on a great campus of many buildings and students may live in dorms or off campus. Bertha's classes were in just one building.

Another difference is that high school prepared students. Bertha spent time earning her teaching degree in high school. Certification was helped through classes there. What she gained from Billings was training so that she could be qualified to get a teaching job. After the first college classes, she taught in a regular school during the school year and then got more "training" during the summer months and

continued to do that for three years. Bertha taught at three different one-room schools during her teaching career. She had to be prepared to teach 20 or so students different subjects and teach eight grades.

One similarity between education classes in Bertha's time and ours is the few number of men involved in education.

From Bertha's experience, I learned that I have little to complain about. Bertha had fewer luxuries: no telephone, TV, or computer.

My leisure time offers more opportunities. Bertha's enjoyment was going to movies with her pastor and his family. She cannot remember places that young people could go. She and roommates spent hours walking, reading, and studying. Al-

though Bertha's and my dreams of becoming a teacher resemble each other, our experiences prove to be very different.

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An article written by Amy Whittle comparing the experiences of education students (Bertha Stensland Nelson and herself) over the past 70 years in Montana. Source thought to be the Glasgow Courier. Date: unknown. (Courtesy of the Valley County Historical Society, Glasgow, Montana.)



**FLOYD E. NELSON  
BERTHA STENSLAND NELSON**

Floyd was born to Nels Chris and Mary Nelson on April 20, 1907 in Detroit Lakes, Minn. He came with his parents to Montana when he was four years old. His parents homesteaded in the Tampico area and the land is still farmed by Floyd and his sons.

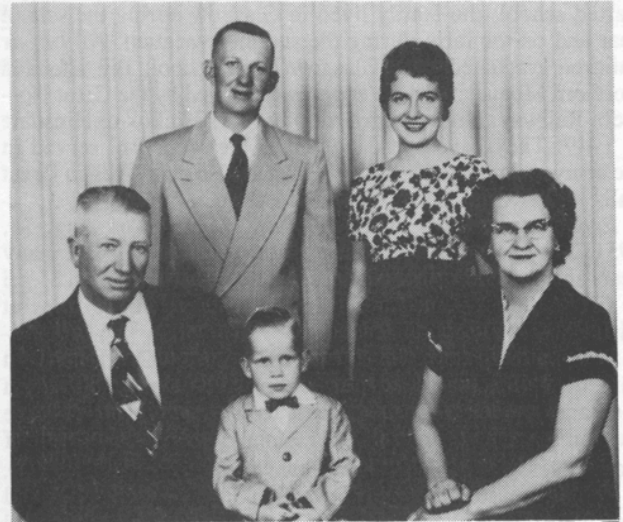
Floyd spent his early years on the family farm and helping his neighbors. In the 20's, he spent time working at the smelter in Anaconda. His father passed away in 1927, so he returned to the farm to help his younger brother.

In 1933, Floyd worked at the Fort Peck Dam. He was on the crew that cleared trees and brush in preparation for the building of the spillway. He also drove a truck hauling dirt in building of that structure. He later was employed in building the grade for the railroad.

In 1934, Floyd and Bertha Stensland were married and they are living in the Highland community. Their home is the old Highland School, which was moved one-quarter mile from its old location to its present one. Floyd and Bertha are owners of former homesteader's land and besides farming were ranching also.

They have three children: Floyd, Jr., Beverly Ann, and Donald Bruce. They attended the Tampico School, which was

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**Floyd and Bertha (Stensland) Nelson Family - back L-R: Floyd Jr. and Beverly; front: Floyd, Donald and Bertha.**

then the closest school, and then graduated from Glasgow High. There wasn't a school bus to Tampico, so the parents had to get the children to school. When they became of high school age, a bus took them to Glasgow.

Floyd and Bertha are Lutherans and were members of the Highland Lutheran Church. Now they are members of the First Lutheran Church of Glasgow.

They have six grandchildren: Jackee Nelson Svien of Napa, Calif.; Sally in Kalispell, Mont.; Gina Nelson Reyling of Glasgow who is attending school in Los Angeles, Calif.; Theresa Nelson of Billings; Bill Pederson attending medical school in Albuquerque, N.M.; and Barbara Pederson of Billings who is attending school in Fullerton, Calif. They also have three great grandchildren: Jessica, Joey and Arielle Svien in Napa, Calif.

Bertha was the second child of Elias and Anna Stensland. She was born on July 15, 1911 on the original homestead in the Highland community. Mrs. Dickman was the attendant at her birth.

She attended Highland School through the 8th grade and graduated from Glasgow High School in 1930. She became a rural school teacher after Teacher's Training and graduation from high school. Teachers had to renew their certificates every two years by attending college nine weeks in the summer. Bertha taught at the Buggy Creek, Tampico, and Riverside Schools. She attended college at Miles City and Billings, Mont. After her marriage she substituted teaching at the Tampico School.

Bertha has been active in 4-H and has been a leader of the Tampico Boy's 4-H Club for 43 years. Her children and grandchildren have been members of the club. On 4-H Achievement Day, Sept. 28, 1986, Bertha was honored for 40 years service as a volunteer 4-H leader. She also was a Bible School teacher in Tampico during two-week sessions of Bible study given by the Lutheran Church in Glasgow. She was also a member of the Hospital Guild in Glasgow.



## ELIAS AND ANNA (OLSON) STENSLAND

Elias and Anna (Olson) Stensland were early homesteaders in the Highland Community.

Elias was born April 25, 1878 in Hageboastal Lyndal, Norway, and came to the United States when he was 18 years of age. He filed on a homestead near Antler, N.D.

Anna Olson was born April 10, 1875 in Konsmo Skofteland, Norway, and came to the United States as a young girl. For many years she was a cook at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn. She was proud to have been a close friend of Helga Fjelstad, a school matron for 33 years who lived to see Fjelstad Hall named for her. It was a dormitory and also housed a library. Later Mom moved to Mohall, N.D. There she and Elias were married on July 7, 1906.

Grandma Randi Stensland and Mom each filed on a homestead of 160 acres about 12 miles northwest of Glasgow in 1908. This community was known as the Highland community for it was above Milk River on the hills.

They came to Glasgow by immigrant box car on the Great Northern Railroad loaded with household goods, horses and machinery. A well had to be dug by hand and lumber was hauled from Glasgow to build a house and barn.

During the early homesteading days neighbors lived very close and helped each other. Most communities first built a school and then a church. These two held most of the social life of the early settlers.

Early church services were held in various homes. A church was built in 1923 with the help of the whole community. It was the Highland Lutheran Church. For money to operate the church and pay the ministers, the Ladies Aide put on family affairs for all of the community to enjoy, even though they were not of the Lutheran faith. Dad was secretary-treasurer for many years. He also served as secretary-treasurer of the

Glasgow Lutheran church. In 1937 the Highland church was joined to the Glasgow Lutheran church. Mom was the secretary-treasurer of the Highland Ladies Aide for many years.

The rural school, Highland, was built one half mile north of the farm. Many of the teachers roomed and boarded with the folks. At one time there were eight rural schools in District 14. The school programs, and especially the Christmas ones, were big events in the community and people came from far and near. Benches were set up and there was always a large Christmas tree with candles. When they were lit someone would have to stand by and watch for fear of fires.

The Dolson grove, a shady spot, was a popular place for picnics for many years. At the end of the school year they would have picnics as well as one on the Fourth of July.

Summers ceased to bring any relief from the wind, especially during the '30s. Any cloud in the sky sent everyone running to the cellars as this usually turned into a tornado or cyclone. There were many destructive hail and wind storms during those homesteading years and the safest places were the cellars dug beneath the houses or the root cellars dug to keep the potatoes, carrots, and other vegetables over for winter use. After milking the cows and separating the milk and cream, Mom would cool it in water and sometimes take it down the cellar as it stayed cooler there.

Another problem coming during the summer months were the gypsies who traveled the road near the house, and stopped at home to steal whatever was in sight.

In winter blizzards were common, resulting in large snow drifts. Horses pulling sleds were used for travel, as the roads were paths and ruts formed from common use.

Mail came from Glasgow on the "Skidoo", a short train running on the Great Northern track. It hauled mail, milk, freight, and passengers. If you hauled your cream cans close to the track and waved, they would stop and pick them up and return the empties the next trip. In times of floods and muddy roads, passengers would walk to the track and get a trip to town. Dad hauled the mail for many years. In the winter he had a "cab" made of canvas to cover the sled. Mail was delivered on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. When the Milk River was flooding, he used a row boat to cross it and walk the fourth of a mile to the Tampico Post Office and store. The folks always ordered the Norwegian newspaper, DECORAH POSTEN, a paper printed in Decorah, Iowa. Besides news, it had a cartoon, Par and Ola, in its weekly publication. Dad continued on with the mail route when he got a Model T. The rural route was discontinued in April, 1953.

Mom had a beautiful asparagus fern which she had in an old butter churn. This plant always sat near a west window and was never repotted. It only had an amount of soil removed by hand, so as not to damage the roots, and new field top soil added. This plant provided greenery for a lot of the funerals held in the Highland Church. It kept coming back and never seemed to hurt it when it was cut for these solemn occasions.

After the crops were harvested and during the winter months, Dad ground feed both for himself and neighbors who lived many miles around.

Four daughters were born to this marriage. Agnes married Chris Molvig and lived at Tampico; Bertha married Floyd Nelson and lived near the homestead; Elise married Bill Kirkland and lived in Nashua; and Gladys married Lloyd Flesjer and lived in Glasgow.

Many happy times were had in the Highland community.

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**Elias Stensland Family - front L-R: Elias and Anna Stensland; back: daughters - Bertha, Agnes, Gladys and Elise.**

Basket and pie socials were very popular. The Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year holidays were special occasions to be with the neighbors. Delicious dinners were served family style, with the parents always eating first, then the teenagers, and the younger ones were the last. There was always plenty of good food for everyone. There was no electric power, kerosene lamps or gasoline lanterns were used.

Dad and Mom spent all their life on this homestead. Dad passed away on Feb. 7, 1960, and Mom passed away on June 11, 1951.

Most of the old landmarks from Highland community are gone, but if one wanted to walk around the prairies they could come across rock piles, cellar holes, old rotten lumber, and metal as reminders of an earlier era. Trails where cattle, horses, and buggies followed are still visible to one who knows where to look. Memories, both pleasant and sad, are about all that remain of the brave people who came to find better lives. Many left during the hard times and will be forgotten, but the survivors, like Mom and Dad, have many heirs who keep their memories.

Compiled by the four daughters--Agnes, Bertha, Elise and Gladys

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**To Bertha,**

Bertha Nelson became a 4-H leader in 1946 taking over the Tampico Boy's. At that time there was a Tampico Boys Club and a Tampico Girls Club - - each separate. In 1949 the clubs consolidated under the Tampico Boys and has remained so since then with Bertha as an organizational leader.

Bertha and Floyd raised three children; Floyd, Beverly and Don - all who were 4-H members under her leadership. Her four granddaughters also benefited having "Grandma" as their 4-H leader.

Bertha has always enjoyed working with kids and continues to do so. We thank you - Bertha - for 40 years of volunteer work with "our" kids.

*A Tribute to*

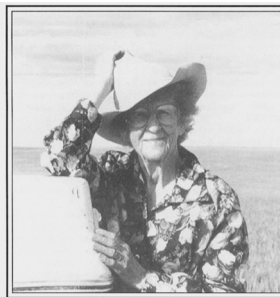


**Bertha Nelson**

1946 - 1986



*For 40 Years Service  
as a  
Volunteer 4-H Leader*



*As a 4-H leader, I feel that I have helped members grow from young curious children to respected members of today's society. They truly uphold the 4-H pledge of my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service and my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world.*

*I am very proud to have been a 4-H leader, proud of all the members and what they have become today with the guidance of 4-H.*

Bertha Nelson  
4-H Leader



**The Glasgow Courier**  
 THURSDAY, OCT. 9, 1986-1B

**BERTHA NELSON** shows off a corsage presented her on 4-H Achievement Day, Sept. 28, 1986, in First Lutheran Church when she was honored for 40 years of leadership in 4-H circles. She was presented a silver engraved tray from the Valley County 4-H Council. Working in 4-H is "just a part of me," Nelson said. She plans to continue extending a helping hand wherever she can in the 4-H program. She praised the youths, 4-H leaders, parents and the county extension agents over the long span of years for making 4-H an important part of the lives of Valley County residents.

Source: The Glasgow Courier, Thursday, October 9, 1986, 1B

**My Reflections**  
*by Bertha Nelson*

"In 1946, I started as a 4-H leader of the Tampico Boys 4-H Club and remained a leader for the next 50 years. It was something I enjoyed and miss now. The club members were special, the parents always willing to help and the community always attended events.

In the beginning there were sewing, animal projects and gardening for members to participate in. The many events were held at the Tampico hall and still are held there today.

The County Extension Agent would attend a 4-H meeting and the agent, leaders and members would travel from home to home and look at the 4-H projects members were taking.

A few of the yearly events the club sponsored were IFYE delegate and outside speakers. Rural Life Sunday always had a good club attendance, also.

As a 4-H leader, I feel that I have helped members grow from young curious children to respected members of today's society. They truly uphold the 4-H pledge of my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service and my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world.

I am very proud to have been a 4-H leader, proud of all the members and what they have become today with the guidance of 4-H."

Bulletin published by the Tampico 4 H Club honoring Bertha (Stensland) Nelson for her years service as a volunteer 4-H leader as well as reflections of what it meant to be a 4-H leader. (Courtesy of Gina (Nelson) Reyling).



I want to commend you for volunteering 40 years of service to the Valley County 4-H Council. Through your commitment to the 4-H program, you have helped generations understand the importance of agriculture to their communities. It's people like you, Bertha, who give meaning to the word "dedication". Enjoy your celebration and best wishes for your future endeavors.  
Ted Schwinden  
Governor of the State of Montana



It is with great joy and pride that I join your friends, family and co-workers in honoring you for your 40th year of service to 4-H. You are something of a living legend in Valley County, and it is entirely appropriate that your many admirers pay tribute to you on County Achievement Day.  
You have touched the lives of two generations of Valley County residents, and through your leadership abilities have instilled in them a respect for hard work, for the land, and for their own talents. God bless you for your accomplishments. Best wishes in all your endeavors, and continued success to you and 4-H.  
Ron Marlenee  
U.S. Representative from Montana

Forty years of service to the 4-H program! Bertha we, the state 4-H Council, salute you! Your dedicated service to the 4-H program is sincerely appreciated by 4-Hers and leaders across this state. It's leaders like yourself that makes our program the success that it is! Have a wonderful day.  
Marcia Hollandsworth  
President  
State 4-H Council



A 4-H meeting is scheduled. Come rain or shine, mud or snow, or good weather and roads, the meeting will go on. Regardless of the importance of the meeting, be it a council meeting, a committee meeting, or a special activity, Bertha Nelson will be there. She is there willing to share ideas, assume responsibility, and listen. Thank you Bertha for 40 years of faithful dedication.  
Dorothy Hlad  
Valley County Council President

The essence of Bertha is the quiet peace that comes from within. Her approach to each person, every problem and any decision always comes out a positive reinforcement of the value of the individual involved. I will always be able to hear her quietly ask "Peggy, what do you think?" or "Do you think we should--?" and I feel worth more for having been asked; even though I know she probably already had the answers. She has always shown the same consideration to the members of our club, treating each as a very important person during the years when children need this so much. We can only begin to realize how great the influence of one person can be when we realize how many of us she has touched over her many years.  
Peggy Cornwell  
Leader, Tampico Boys 4-H Club  
Vice-President, Montana 4-H Foundation

Rarely do we come across someone in today's world who has made a virtual career of voluntary service to young people. Bertha Nelson is one of those rare individuals, and the 4-H youth who have been the focus of her attention will reap a lifetime of immeasurable benefits from her unbounded dedication.  
Ted Schye  
Representative

Dedication is the key word to describe the feeling Bertha has for the 4-H Program. Her leadership has enriched the lives of hundreds of youth, by teaching them skills for living. Bertha's "special touch" - that of encouraging and guiding young people to achieve their highest goals is a living legend of her 40 years as a dedicated leader in Valley County.  
Barbara Hoffman Verlin Koenig  
Valley County Extension Agents

To give of oneself for the benefit of others is the richest kind of giving. Money can't buy the love, the dedication, the inspiration, the teaching, or the leadership you've given to 4-H boys and girls. You've helped youth to lead better lives; you've made your community, your county, your state, and your world a better place in which to live. We salute you!  
James F. Sargent  
State Program Coordinator  
for 4-H and Other Youth

Congratulations to you for forty years of dedicated service to the youth of Valley County through serving as a 4-H leader. Knowing you, your interest in the 4-H program will continue throughout your lifetime. I am grateful to have had the good privilege of working with you through many of those years and I was sure that any task you assumed would be completed to perfection without further checking on my part. Your reward comes to you in the love and gratitude of all of us who have been, and continue to be blessed by your example of unselfish service. God bless you for a job so well done.  
Your long time friend,  
Iva L. Holladay

The people of Valley County have been fortunate for the past forty years in having Bertha Nelson as a teacher for their children, not only as a 4-H leader, but a grade school teacher as well. I look back with pride and can say Bertha was my teacher for grades two and three. She has always had that special way with children of all ages. Every 4-H member or student has been inspired through her guidance to believe that they are important individuals and have a special place in our community.  
Thanks Bertha for sharing your time with us!  
Howard Cornwell  
Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners

Bertha Nelson, a 4-H leader of the Tampico Boys' 4-H Club, has served on the Valley County 4-H Council as President of the Council and on many committees as chairman or member. In my tenure as County Agent in the years from 1956 to 1977, 4-H members and their parents have benefited greatly by her leadership. She as given of her time and talents to encourage 4-H members to excel in their projects. She has also contributed to the 4-H Council in planning the 4-H programs in the county. I thank you, Bertha, for all of your efforts and the years of work you have donated so generously.  
Al Thorson  
County Extension Agent  
Retired



I would like for you to convey my sincere congratulations and thanks on behalf of National 4-H Council for Bertha's long record of leadership. She has certainly made clear that she cares about the future of our country. Her 40 years of work in the 4-H program have given countless young people a head start in life. She personifies the finest in 4-H volunteer spirit.  
Grant A. Shrum  
President  
National 4-H Council

It has been a distinct privilege to work with you each year during the Fair. Your contribution of time and energy in helping your 4-H Club prepare exhibits and your ready smile and willingness to explain the exhibits to the public have greatly promoted the 4-H's importance to the Fair. Congratulations on your years of service Bertha, and "Thank You" for all your help.  
Ardice M. Stellflug  
Fair Manager  
Northeast Montana Fair

As America has moved through the 20th Century with a dedication to education, so 4-H has made its unique contribution to informal, out-of-school opportunities for youth. In all its 80 plus years of success, nothing is more clear than the critical role of the parents and volunteers who have made the 4-H program work. Mrs. Bertha Nelson is one of those special people, and it is with pleasure that we at Montana State University salute her 40th year of volunteer leadership in 4-H.  
William J. Tietz  
President  
Montana State University

It is very fitting that the Valley County 4-H Council has chosen to honor you for 40 years of leadership to 4-H in Valley County and Montana. While your major efforts have been directed toward the Tampico 4-H Club and to Valley County, I'm confident that the citizens of the entire state and even the nation, through your 4-H alumni, have felt the impact of your guiding hand, warmth and leadership upon the many young people that have been your club members. Thanks from the entire staff of the Montana Cooperative Extension Service. Best wishes in the years ahead.  
LeRoy D. Luft  
Acting Director

A collection of tributes published by the Tampico 4 H Club honoring Bertha (Stensland) Nelson for her years service as a volunteer 4-H leader. (Courtesy of Gina (Nelson) Reyling).





BERTHA NELSON, left, and Gladys Flesjer, CattleWomen members, spent a good share of Thursday afternoon at B&B IGA, distributing samples of beef recipes in celebration of Ag Week in Valley County.



### Bouquet for Bertha

Bertha Nelson of Tampico, right, earns statewide recognition and a wheat-weaving wall hanging for 36 years of service as a 4-H leader at the Montana 4-H Leader Forum here Nov. 4-6. Presenting the award on behalf of all of the 4-H leaders in the state is Merrimae Solberg of Dodson, a Phillips County 4-H leader. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 200 leaders from throughout the state attended the forum, and Nelson had served as leader longer than anyone else at the session. A story on the forum will be published in next week's Hi-Line Express.

Source: The Glasgow Courier, Glasgow, Montana.

## Bertha Nelson honored for 40 years of service

Everyone's attention turned to Bertha Nelson, a veteran volunteer 4-H leader, at the annual 4-H Achievement Day program in First Lutheran Church Sept. 28.

Nelson became a leader in the Tampico Boys' 4-H Club in 1946. At that time, there was a Tampico Boys' Club and a Tampico Girls' Club. In 1949, the clubs consolidated under the Tampico Boys' and has remained under that club ever since. Nelson was the organizational leader.

She and her husband, Floyd, raised three children. Floyd, Beverly and Don, all of whom were 4-H members under her leadership. Her four granddaughters also had "Grandma" as their 4-H leader.

Peggy Cornwell, 4-H leader and vice president of the Montana 4-H Foundation was in charge of the special program for Nelson when all 4-H leaders praised Nelson for her involvement with both youths and adults in 4-H.

A message from President Ronald Reagan was read: "I am pleased to extend greetings to all the members of the Valley County 4-H Council as you honor Bertha Nelson for her 40 years of devoted service. Your tribute to Mrs. Nelson is most fitting, and Nancy joins me in sending her our heartiest congratulations and

best wishes. God bless you."

Nelson also received a card from the White House: "Nancy and I are pleased to congratulate you for your outstanding and dedicated volunteer service. The lives of all Americans are enhanced whenever someone extends a helping hand in a spirit of love and neighborliness. Your example encourages us and inspires others. Thank you and God bless you. -- President Ronald Reagan."

More than a dozen messages came from others, including Congressman Ron Marlenee; Gov. Ted Schwinden; Grant A. Shrum, president, National 4-H Council; William J. Tietz, president, Montana State University; LeRoy D. Luft, acting 4-H Director; James F. Sargent, state program coordinator for 4-H and other youth; Marcia Hollandsworth, president, state 4-H Council; Iva Holladay, former Valley County extension agent; and a number of local persons, including Rep. Ted Schye; Dorothy Hlad, Valley County Council outgoing president; Peggy Cornwell; Barbara Hoffmann, and Verlin Koenig, county extension agents; Howard Cornwell, chairman, county commissioners; Al Thorson, retired county agent; and Ardice Stellflug, fair manager, Northeast Montana Fair.

Source: The Glasgow Courier, Glasgow, Montana.



## Bertha Nelson celebrates 80th birthday

Bertha Nelson, a lifelong resident of the county, was honored on her 80th birthday at the Cottonwood Inn July 14.

Hosting the special event were her children, Floyd and Deanna Nelson and Don Nelson of Glasgow and Beverly Pederson of Billings, and grandchildren, Jackie Svien of Napa, Calif., Sally Nelson and Gina Reyling of Glasgow and Therese Hallock and Barb Pederson of Billings. A grandson, Bill Pederson of Albuquerque, N.M., was unable to attend.

Beverly Pederson was at the guest book.

In addition to the special birthday cake, sandwiches, fruit, mints, nuts and beverages were served. At the serving table were all of her granddaughters; daughter-in-law, Deanna Nelson; and Carrie Nicol.

Bertha Stensland grew up in the Highland Community and attended school there through eighth grade, graduating from Glasgow High School in 1930. She taught rural schools at Buggy Creek, Tampico and Riverside. In 1934, she married Floyd Nelson from the Buggy Creek Community and they were engaged in farming and ranching in that area. She was also a substitute teacher at the Tampico School.

In 1946, she became a leader in the Tampico Boys' 4-H Club and continued in that capacity for more than 40

years. Sept. 28, 1986, she was presented a silver tray at 4-H Achievement Day in recognition of her dedicated services to youths and adults in the 4-H program. All three of her children and her four granddaughters were involved in 4-H under her guidance and leadership.

"Nancy and I are pleased to congratulate you for your outstanding and dedicated volunteer service," were the words of President Ronald Reagan read during the Achievement Day program. "The lives of all Americans are enhanced whenever someone extends a helping hand in the spirit of love and neighborliness. Your example encourages us and inspires others. Thank you and God bless you."

Other messages of recognition poured in from Gov. Ted Schwinden, national and state 4-H officials, past and then present county extension agents and various other groups and individuals.

Nelson was also cited as Women of Distinction and praised for her volunteer work in the area of economic and social development by Soroptimist International of the Americas,

Glasgow chapter, in May, 1991.

Special guests at the birthday celebration included her late husband's sister, Hazel Nelson Krause and her husband, Johnny, of Belle Fourche, S.D.

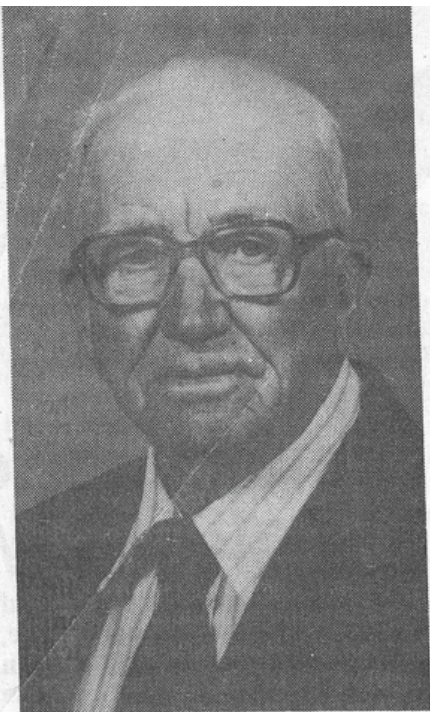
Numerous relatives and friends attended the party from this area.



BERTHA NELSON

Source: The Glasgow Courier, Glasgow, Montana. Date: 1991. (Courtesy of Gina (Nelson) Reyling).





FLOYD NELSON  
**Floyd Nelson**

Floyd Nelson, 82, a resident of this area for more than three quarters of a century, died at his home in Tampico Feb. 2. Services were held at 2 p.m., Feb. 7, in First Lutheran Church with Pastor Robert Nilsen officiating.

A son of Nels Chris and Mary Nelson, Mr. Nelson was born in Detroit Lakes, Minn., April 20, 1907. When he was four years old, he came to the Tampico area with his parents where they homesteaded. The land continues to be farmed by the Nelson family. In the 1920s, Mr. Nelson worked at the smelter in Anaconda. After his father died in 1927, he returned to Tampico to work the homestead with his younger brothers. In 1933, he worked at Fort Peck Dam and Spillway. He was later employed in building the grade for the railroad.

In 1934, Mr. Nelson married Bertha Stensland. They lived in the Highland Community, their home being the former Highland School which was moved a quarter of a mile from its early-day location to the present site. The couple owned the homestead land where they have been farming and ranching. He was a member of First Lutheran Church of Glasgow. He enjoyed working livestock, farming, hunting, family and visiting relatives and friends over a cup of coffee.

Survivors include the widow, Bertha; two sons, Floyd Nelson Jr. of Glasgow and Donald Bruce Nelson of Tampico; a daughter, Beverly Ann Pederson of Billings; six grandchildren, Jackee Nelson Svien of Napa, Calif., Sally Nelson of Whitefish, Gina Nelson Reyling of Glasgow, Theresa Nelson of Billings, Bill Pederson of Albuquerque, N.M., Barbara Pederson of Fullerton, Calif.; three great-grandchildren, Jessica, Joey and Arielle Svien of Napa; a brother, Victor of Napa; and three sisters, Annie Stull of Willows, Calif., Hazel Krause of Belle Fourche, S.D., and Lorraine Bain of Chireno, Texas.

He was preceded in death by four brothers, Martin Nelson, Arthur Nelson, Morris Nelson and Max Nelson; and two sisters, Mabel Nelson and Nora Whitson.

Serving as pallbearers were Danny Maag, Steve Page, Ernie Martin, Bill Cornwell, Scott Boreson, George Kolstad, Charlie Woods, Bud Miller, Mitch Etchart, Howard Cornwell, Bennie Boreson, Bud Potter, Cliff Rice, Chuck McVee and John Wesen.

Burial was in the Highland Cemetery. The local mortuary was in charge of arrangements.

The obituary of Floyd Ernest Nelson published in the Glasgow Courier, Glasgow, Montana. February, 1990.

*Rec'd Feb 2nd 1990  
 Feb 8th funeral*

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**Floyd Nelson**

TAMPICO — Floyd Nelson farmed and ranched on the family homestead after his father's death in 1927. He enjoyed hunting, family and visiting with friends.

Mr. Nelson, 82, died of natural causes Friday in his home.

Born in Detroit Lakes, Minn., a son of Nels Chris and Mary Nelson, the family homesteaded in the Tampico area. In the 1920s, he worked at the smelter in Anaconda and in 1933, he worked at Fort Peck Dam. In 1934, he married Bertha Stensland.

Survivors include his wife; two sons, Floyd Nelson Jr. and Donald Bruce, both of Tampico; a daughter, Beverly Ann Pederson of Billings; a brother, Victor of Napa, Calif.; three sisters, Annie Stull of Willows, Calif., Hazel Krause of Belle Fourche, S.D., and Lorraine Bain of Chireno, Texas; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Services will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday in First Lutheran Church in Glasgow with burial in Highland Cemetery. Bell Mortuary is in charge.

The obituary of Floyd Ernest Nelson. Source unknown. (Courtesy of the Valley County Historical Society, Glasgow, Montana.)



## Bertha T. Nelson

Bertha Nelson, 94, a lifelong resident of the Tampico community, died of natural causes in the Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital March 20, 2006.

Bertha was the second child of Elias and Anna Stensland. She was born on the 15th of July, 1911 on the original homestead in the Highland community. She attended Highland School through 8 grades and graduated from the Glasgow High School in 1930. She became a rural school teacher after Teacher's Training and graduation from High School. Bertha taught at the Buggy Creek, Tampico, and Riverside Schools. She attended college at Miles City and Billings, MT. After her marriage, she was a substitute teacher at the Tampico School, as well as teaching bible study there for the Lutheran Church.

In 1934, Bertha married Floyd Nelson from the Buggy Creek community. They farmed and ranched in the Highland community and lived in the old Highland schoolhouse. After Floyd's death in 1990, Bertha continued to live on the ranch in the Tampico area. Bertha thoroughly enjoyed visiting with company, and they could always count on a hot cup of coffee and a home cooked meal.

Bertha made a virtual career of volunteer service, dedicating 50 years to the young people of our community. She was honored by President Ronald Reagan and Gov. Ted Schwinden, as well as numerous state and national officials for this leadership. Bertha and Floyd raised three children, Floyd Jr, Beverly, and Don, all whom were 4-H members under her leadership. Her grandchildren, as well as great-grandchildren, have all benefited from having "Grandma" as their 4-H leader. Whether she was working as superintendent of the 4-H clothing, or watching the livestock showmanship and judging, the Northeast Montana Fair was always a high point of Bertha's year.

Bertha was a lifelong member of the Highland Lutheran Church, where she was baptized and confirmed, as well as a member of the First Lutheran Church of Glasgow. She enjoyed attending Sunday services or listening to them on the radio.

Bertha is survived by sons Floyd "Sonny" (Deanna) and Donald (Sheila) of Glasgow, and a daughter Beverly (Rollin) Pederson of Billings, six grandchildren; Jackee (Ron) Svien of Sacramento, CA; Sally (Robert) Irwin of Glasgow; Gina (Joe) Reyling of Glasgow; Theresa Nelson of Missoula; Bill Pederson of Denver, CO, and Barbara Pederson of Billings, three step-grandchildren; Derek Schedel of Denver, Co; Tara Schedel of Glasgow; and Tori Schedel, and step-great grandchild, Tatum Nyquist of Glasgow, seven great-grandchildren: Jessica, Joe and Arielle Svien of Sacramento, CA; and Rose, JoLynn, Mick and Matt Reyling of Glasgow, and one great-great grandson; Connor Stingley of Sacramento, CA. and a sister, Gladys Flesjer of Glasgow; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents and sisters; Agnes Stensland Molvig and Elise Stensland Kirkland.



A photograph of a plaque created to honor the memory of Bertha (Stensland) Nelson by the Tampico Boys 4-H Club. The plaque stands in the 4-H memory garden near the Fairgrounds in Glasgow, Montana.

The obituary of Bertha (Stensland) Nelson published in the Glasgow Courier, Glasgow, Montana. March, 2006.