



# Irmgard Gerlach

SEP 27, 1924 - MAY 8, 2020



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## Irmgard Gerlach Obituary

Irmgard Gerlach, longtime Bixby resident, passed away Friday, May 8, 2020 in Tulsa at the age of 95. Cremation arrangements have been entrusted to Bixby Funeral Service. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to St. Francis Hospice or another cancer foundation of your choice.

Born September 27, 1924 in Stade, Germany, Irmgard was the daughter of Claus and Maria (Hemke) Stueven. She loved to tell stories about her youth in Germany. While attending a dance at the age of 15, Irmgard met Erich Gerlach, a soldier in the German Army. The couple married April 12, 1941 at a Lutheran Church in Stade. She and her family overcame many circumstances throughout World War II while living near Hamburg. Many trips were made to the basement as the whistles sounded for bombings overhead.

Following the war, Irmgard brought her family to the United States in 1953 to join her brothers, who immigrated in 1938 to work for Standard Oil. They were likely one of the last families to immigrate through Ellis Island. In those days, family members would sponsor one another for citizenship. It was common for several families to occupy one household. Once they arrived, she began working in a sewing factory while Erich eventually found employment refinishing furniture in Kansas City. Irmgard eventually worked as a waitress in some of the top upscale restaurants in town. They were poor and worked extremely hard while raising their two children, Rainer and Ursal. Their children's career paths eventually brought them to the Tulsa area where Irmgard worked as a baker for Bixby Public Schools.

Irmgard loved gardening vegetables and growing beautiful flowers, particularly roses and orchids. Fishing was continually a part of her life, especially trout fishing near the dam on Lake Taneycomo. She loved to travel the world during her retirement, visiting places such as the Baltics, the Mediterranean, the Amazon River, the Panama Canal, New Zealand, and Hawaii. She cruised to numerous destinations with friends, neighbors, and family in her later years, and visited her homeland in Germany multiple times. Irmgard was always proud of her German



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heritage. Her grandchildren meant the world to her! She never had any trouble staying occupied and will not soon be forgotten by her family and her beloved friends.

Surviving family include her son, Rainer Gerlach and his wife, Janet of Tulsa; her grandchildren: Donna Christ, Mark Oots of Kansas City, Debbie Lynn of Broken Arrow, and Sarah Gerlach of Tulsa; her great grandchildren: Johnny Christ, Emily Christ, and Manin Lynn. Irmgard was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, and her daughter Ursel in 2016.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Irmgard Gerlach's name to St. Francis Hospice or another cancer foundation of your choice.

To send flowers  
to the family or plant a tree  
in memory of Irmgard Gerlach, please visit our floral store.

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Join us in honoring Irmgard by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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