

Reana (Reed) Knochenmus

October 24, 1906 – November 17, 1992

Reana Knochenmus, 86, of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, passed away on Tuesday, November 17, 1992, at Bethany Nursing Home. Born Reana Reed on October 24, 1906, in Sioux Falls, she dedicated her life to education and to the service of children, particularly those who were deaf or had speech and communication needs.

Reana attended Sioux Falls elementary schools and Washington High School, then spent two years at Augustana College. She later completed her formal education at Sioux Falls College, earning a bachelor's degree. Her teaching career began in rural South Dakota, with one year at Bath and two years at Corsica, experiences she later remembered as formative in her professional life.



Reana in 1929 as new teacher

In the fall of 1929, Reana enrolled in the first teacher-training course at the South Dakota School for the Deaf (SDSD). She later wrote that she was the first person to complete the two- year program. After teaching a full term at SDSD, she accepted a position at the Oregon School for the Deaf, where she taught for three years.



Desiring to return closer to home and friends, Reana applied for and accepted a position back at SDSD. She would go on to serve the school for 25 years, including 17 years as a classroom teacher and 8 years as supervising principal. Her long tenure reflected both her leadership and her deep commitment to deaf education in South Dakota.

Reana married Albert Knochenmus on December 31, 1935. The couple farmed near Sioux Falls for many years before selling the farm and moving into the city. Albert preceded her in death in 1976.

After retiring from SDSD, Reana did not leave education behind. In 1965, she offered her experience to the Crippled Children's Hospital-School, where she served for seven years as a speech therapist, working one-on-one with both inpatient and outpatient children needing speech correction. She fully retired in 1972, at the age of 65.

Reflecting on her career in her personal journal, Reana summed up her life's work simply and warmly: it "all adds up to 37 years of enjoyable association with school children of all ages."

Reana was a longtime member of the First United Methodist Church, joining in 1934, and was active in the local, state, and national Retired Teachers Association, the American Association of Retired Persons, and the Bergeland Center for Seniors.

She is survived by nieces and nephews. Memorial services were held at Miller Funeral Home, with burial at Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

