

A Legend in Caring

Her name is legendary in Gig Harbor – a bay on Puget Sound and a city on its shore in Pierce County, Washington. And she is an important figure in the history of Life Care Centers of America.

Inez Leland Glass was, without doubt, a woman who made this world a better place because of her love for people and her commitment to serve her Lord and Savior by caring for others.

Inez, a nurse by trade, joined the United States Army Nurse Corps in 1943. She served in several locations in the United States, a base in Scotland, and the Cottesmore Royal Air Force Base in England. It was there that she met her future husband, Eugene Glass.

Rising through her expertise to the rank of first lieutenant, Inez flew the Atlantic Ocean many times, caring for wounded soldiers as they made their trips. For her bravery, she received four battle stars for the Normandy, Germany, Northern France and Ardennes Rhineland campaigns in 1944-45. She also earned the prestigious Air Medal.



Inez, her husband and their three children eventually settled in the Tacoma, Washington, area, and she went back to working as a nurse to supplement the family income. When her husband passed away, she took a job in a Tacoma nursing facility to support her family now that she was raising her children on her own. She realized that Gig Harbor needed a good nursing home.

With land she had access to and some of the money her husband had left her – and with the help of many supporters and much prayer – Inez developed a new nursing facility and named it Cottesmore after the charming town in England where she had served as a nurse and met her husband. The facility opened in 1969, becoming not only a place for health care services but a popular community gathering place. She once said, “We did it for the Lord. It’s His work, and it’s going to go on.”

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Years later, when Inez was ready to sell the building, several companies made offers, but she chose Life Care because of the company's close connection to the mission and values upon which Cottesmore had been built. Life Care purchased the building in 1996, but Inez continued to be involved with the residents, families and staff, and headed up the volunteer program.

Todd Fletcher, senior executive director for Life Care in Washington, recalled: "When we first moved to Gig Harbor and started the transition of Cottesmore to Life Care, I soon found that it was going to be a difficult one for the associates in the facility. So many of them called her Mom or Mom Glass. She was a true mother and friend to so many people. Residents' families would visit the facility long after their loved one had discharged, just to see Inez. So we asked her to be our volunteer



coordinator after she sold to Life Care, and she was happy to do so. She would come to Cottesmore every Tuesday and Sunday morning for Bible study and church services for almost 20 years after she sold the facility! Her love for Jesus and sharing His love with others was her highest priority. She was always fun, always sweet, always kind."

At Life Care's annual management meeting in 2009, Inez was presented with Life Care's highest honor, the Carl W. Campbell Wind Beneath My Wings Award, for the company-wide volunteer of the year.

On May 27 of this year, Life Care leadership from the corporate offices flew to the State of Washington for the grand opening of Life Care Center of South Hill, arriving early to visit some area facilities. Cottesmore at Gig Harbor was first on our list. When we arrived, I immediately asked about visiting Inez. Nicole Long, the executive director of Harbor Place at Cottesmore, took me to her apartment in the assisted living section.

We greeted with hugs, and she appeared frail, more than I expected. But we had a stimulating conversation about events of the past, particularly how Forrest Preston literally swept her off her feet during the celebration with the staff upon the announcement of the facility acquisition. When Mr. Preston lifted her to her feet for an impromptu dance, she protested by saying she didn't know how to dance. "Neither do I," he replied. "Oh, dear Lord Jesus," she whispered, as they twirled around the floor, "please forgive me." I'm certain that He did.

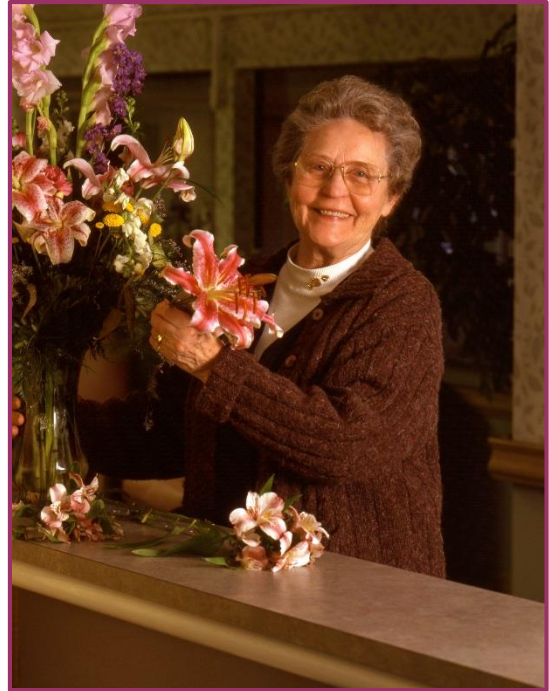
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At the end of our conversation, I told Inez that she should be proud of all that she had done – development of this nursing facility, the thousands of people she had impacted for good physically, emotionally and spiritually. She smiled and nodded her head.

And then I added: “And maybe you don’t realize it or acknowledge it, but Inez, you have an inner light that has an outward glow that draws people to you.”

“Yes, and you’re full of blarney, too!” she exclaimed in characteristic humility.

But it is true. She drew people to herself and to our Lord. Only when we get to heaven will we realize how many people are there because of Inez Glass.



Her funeral is today at 2 p.m. at Neighborhood Church, University Place, with burial at New Tacoma Cemetery. She passed away on Wednesday, June 17, at 93 years of age. But she will live on in the hearts of all who knew her.

– Beecher Hunter