

Katherine Jenness, 91, died June 9, 2011, in Alamogordo, N.M., where she lived for the past 27 years.

Katherine was born in St. Johnsbury, Vt., Oct. 2, 1919, the eldest child of Harold Otis Ward and Jenny Bertha (Nelson) Ward.

She is survived by her three sons and daughter-in-laws, Douglas and Marea, Ian and Margreet, and David and Kay; her grandchildren, Sonja, Beatrix, Lan, Thane, Megan, and Daniel; and her great-grandchildren, Allison, Liam, Jackson, and Isaac.

Katherine grew up on several farms and logging camps in the Danville area of Vermont, attending elementary schools in that area. She graduated from St. Johnsbury Academy in 1938 where she was an honor student all four years; on the debate team her senior year; was part of the basketball, tennis, and archery teams; in the school play her sophomore year; and worked on the yearbook her senior year. She won second place in the state creative writing contest in the poetry division.

She attended the University of Vermont for two years studying to be a science teacher and worked summers waiting tables at resorts. At the university she met Robert Jenness (deceased 1998) from Gonic, N.H., who was to be her husband for 58 years. Married in St. Johnsbury in 1940 they moved to St. Paul, Minn. where they lived until 1984. After a year at the University of Minnesota she dropped out to raise her children, but later returned to school and was awarded a B.S. in March 1959 with an independent major in ecology. Her horizons were widened by a year-long visit to The Netherlands, 1961-62, with her husband who was on a Fulbright grant. She also participated with him in several expeditions to Mexico, Australia, and many parts of the United States collecting bats and other mammals for research and participated in many meetings of the American Society of Mammalogists.

Among her many interests and enjoyments was reading, gardening, camping, traveling, birding, square dancing, photography, and going to plays. She loved animals all her life and was skilled in caring for them. In Minnesota she was first a member of the St. Anthony Park Methodist Church and later the Incarnation Lutheran Church. Until her failing health limited her activity, she was active in the Otero County Bird Club, the Native Plants Society of New Mexico-Otero Chapter, the American Association of University Women, the Unitarian Church, and an honorary member of the Alamogordo Rotary Club. Since her house burned down in December 2010 she had been living at the Bee Hive Assisted Living Home.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., Saturday, June 25, at the Hamilton-O'Dell Funeral Home, 1334 N. Scenic Dr., Alamogordo, NM 88310, 575-437-0530. In lieu of flowers send contributions to: Kitty City (Cat adoptions), 921 New York Ave., Alamogordo, NM 88310.