



MARY L. CAIRNS HOLDS HER DAUGHTER, PATIENCE

**Patience Maureen Cairns** was born in born January 16, 1909 at her family's home on Grand Avenue (the site of present-day art gallery) in Grand Lake, the daughter of James and Mary Ross Lyons Cairns.



Patience attended the one-room school house in Grand Lake through the 8th grade. It stood at the corner of Lake and Broadway.



PATIENCE CAIRNS KEMP  
GRAND LAKE, 1913



Grand Lake, Public Beach a. 1915

↑ Patience ↑ Margaret, Ruth + Rosemary Kauffman



Patience went to the first years of high school in Santa Barbara and San Diego, California. Summers were spent at Grand Lake. Her father taught her to drive a model T Ford in San Diego.

James Cairns died in 1925 when she was 16.

She finished high school at Boulder Prep High school in 1926 and went on to graduate from the University of Colorado with a degree in English in 1930. As a graduation present, she and her mother toured Europe that summer.



Teaching jobs were scarce at the beginning of the Depression, so she completed a course in San Bernadino, California, to be qualified as a librarian, in hopes that would increase her chances. Her first teaching job was at the same Grand Lake school she had attended as a child.



She coordinated some writing exercises that also would appeal to the students' interest in skiing. They wrote invitations to students in Routt County to come to a ski meet to be held at the ski hill above the school. She taught for a year in the small coal mining town of Oak Creek, Colorado. Her next teaching job was in Fort Lupton, Colorado. Her contract stated that she must not entertain gentlemen callers in her home and that she must volunteer for community events at least once a week.





In 1943, Colvin Kemp sent her a diamond engagement ring from Hawaii. They had dated in Grand Lake during the year she was teaching there. He had moved to Hawaii in 1941 as a civilian, before the attack on Pearl Harbor. He had been severely injured in a sawmill accident in Grand Lake and was classified 4F for military service. Patience was allowed to move to Hawaii during wartime because she had a profession that was useful to the community. Patience married Marshall Colvin Kemp on September 25, 1943 in Honolulu, Hawaii. She taught at Kamehameha School in Honolulu for the duration of the war. Kamehameha School is a school for children of Hawaiian descent. Her students in Fort Lupton asked her if her students in Hawaii would be speaking English.

After their first daughter, Mary Leilani, was born, Patience and Colvin moved to Naalehu on the Big Island where Colvin was employed as Superintendent of the Garage on the Hutchinson Sugar Plantation. He invented several cane harvesting machines which improved production. He also built a Ferris wheel and an airplane merry-go-round for the town park.



Patience could not bear to miss a summer at Grand Lake. That involved ship or plane journeys to the mainland with two small daughters (Jane Patience was born in Hilo, Hawaii) and a train ride from Oakland, California, to Granby, Colorado, on the California Zephyr.

The family moved to Denver in the mid-fifties. Patience and Colvin developed lots on what had been her grandmother Lyons' homestead about five miles out of Grand Lake on the road to Granby. They built a log cabin there. Colvin cut the trees on the property, skidded them with a draft horse to a log pile. Patience spent the summer straddling the logs and peeling them with a draw knife.

During the school year, she was a substitute teacher in Denver. Colvin was injured in a motorcycle accident in 1962 and died in 1963. At that point, Patience went back to full time teaching until she retired in 1974. Since her love of Grand Lake was so much a part of her life, she moved back to the house she and her mother had had constructed on the lake in 1937.

Patience was instrumental in securing grants to purchase the Kauffman House and forming the Grand Lake Area Historical Society. Her sense of civic duty led her to donate her father's first water rights on the North Inlet to the Town of Grand Lake, to donate the meadow, including a scenic easement, in front of the Presbyterian Church to the church, and to volunteer on the Town's Planning Commission for many years.

Patience Cairns Kemp died January 24, 1997 after a fall in her home at the age of 88.

*(written by Jane Kemp)*

