

On The Record

OBITUARIES

WALTON—Leona Mae Miller Walton passed away Aug. 23, 2019, in her home in Mapleton two days shy of her 94th birthday.

Born Aug. 25, 1925, in Brainerd, Minn., to Earl Miller and Mary Ringering



Leona Walton

Miller, she moved to Hadsall Creek at the age of four and continued to live on the same piece of property for over 90 years.

Leona went to school on the school boat in Mapleton — until World War II and Dwight Walton interrupted her life. Dwight was in the Navy at that time. His ship was torpedoed and, as it was being repaired in Bremerton, the crew was sent to San Diego, Calif., for shore duty.

He hitchhiked to Mapleton and talked her into getting married. They were wed in Springfield in January 1944. Leona left her senior year of high school in April and moved to San Diego, where Dwight had found housing. She immediately found a job as “Rosie the Riveter” working on bomb bay doors on B-24s and B-25s for Consolidated Aircraft.

When Dwight was re-stationed to Browns Field, Calif., further south, she could no longer commute to the job and had to quit. Their daughter Bobbi was born in San Diego during this time.

After Dwight’s discharge, they returned to live on Hadsall Creek, where they built their own home. Their son Greg was born four years after their return to Oregon. Leona continued to live in the same house until June 2019.

After she and Dwight divorced, she married Ernie Grand, Walter Beers and Manuel (Tim) Basham.

At the age of 81, she and Tim drove to his summer home in Alaska towing a

travel trailer carrying her cat, Benny, and her dog, Perry. She was very homesick as she had never been ‘off the creek’ for any length of time since returning after WWII.

Leona loved her God (life-long member of the SDA Church), her family, her animals, and to cook for anyone who entered her home. She loved working at McKnight Veterinary Clinic for over 25 years.

Leona gardened, canned and knew more ways to use plastic butter dishes and plastic jugs than anyone else on Earth. She shot bears in her yard with a single shot shotgun when they molested her apples and raspberries and shot rats in the chicken house with a .22 pistol.

She hated spiders and loved her grandkids and all the extra “grandkids” who came to play rummy, eat toasted cheese sandwiches and tomato soup with her.

Nothing was ever terrible — it was TERRRRRible; nothing was ever awful — it was AWWWWWWful; and nothing was ever beautiful — it was BE-UUUUU-TI-ful.

As her health began to fail, she moved to Greg’s and Connie’s property where hospice was provided by family (especially three of her grandsons and their wives) and friends until her passing.

She is survived by daughter Bobbi Sue (Oley) Nelson, and son Greg (Connie) Walton; grandchildren: Les (DeeAnn) Nelson, Eric (Kim) Nelson, Debi (Jason) Free, Jeff (Kati) Walton, and Mike (Amber) Walton; and 11 great-grandkids whom she greatly loved: Kara, Sean, Haley, Megan, Zach, Sarah, Lindsay, Christopher, Kjerste, Dane and Kendall.

Leona was buried beside her parents at the Mapleton Cemetery on Wednesday, Aug. 28.

A memorial service will be held for her on Saturday, Sept. 7, at 1:30 p.m. at the Florence SDA Church, 4445 Highway 101.

A potluck will follow the service.

Burns’s Riverside Chapel

Florence Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

SHOPE — Roxanna Shope, or “Roxy” as she was known to everyone, passed away peacefully at home in Florence on Aug. 8, 2019, after a several-year battle with Alzheimer’s Disease.



Roxanna Shope

Roxy was born in Watertown, SD., but spent most of her childhood in Scotts Bluff, Neb., and attended high school in Davenport, Iowa. In 1958, she received a B.A. degree from Iowa State Teachers College, where she majored in physical education and minored in English.

She began her long teaching career in Iowa but soon migrated to Lewistown, Mont., following her heart west. She continued her western migration to Denver, Colo., in the 1960s when she accepted an elementary school teaching position with Denver Public Schools, which she held for the next 35 years; she taught grades 1 through 6.

Although she lived in Colorado, her heart remained in Montana where her family had established roots in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Her passion for Western American history and culture led her to begin researching her family tree in the 1970s.

Her endeavor led her to make several trips to Boulder, Mont., and as far as Pennsylvania to visit old homesteads, cemeteries, libraries, courthouses and museums, as well as to speak with local historians and any long-lost relatives she could locate.

Roxy was able to trace her roots to Europe and Scotland, which enabled her to identify her clan tartan. She had always had an affinity for bagpipe music, and now she understood why.

In the 1980s, she began compiling and organiz-

ing her research findings, adding, editing, writing, re-searching, working long into the night on her computer. The fruit of all this matured at long last in the mid-90s into a 15-chapter, 280-page, 170-photograph, hardbound, self-published labor of love.

The book is entitled, “Bratwurst, Bagpipes and Tea — A Family History of...”

Her family, now extended family of newly discovered relatives, and close friends shared her sense of accomplishment and relief. It was probably the singular most satisfying, self-fulfilling time in her life.

Roxy was not defined, however, by one thing. As an elementary physical education teacher for her “day job,” Roxy was passionate as well. She loved her students and they loved her. She could connect with most of her students, but she did have her favorites. She made gym class fun for them, regardless of their innate physical abilities or athleticism.

She never tired of the daily challenge to teach not only sports and gymnastics, but life skills such as sportsmanship and perseverance to children, some of whom came from disadvantaged homes where the rules weren’t always clear and encouragement was sometimes lacking.

Roxy would talk about her “first-grade puppies” who were so innocent and lovable. They would come up to her tugging on her shirt to get her attention or putting their arms around her knees to give her a hug.

Roxy shared her passion for all things Western and outdoors with her long-time friend and soulmate, Juel Ann North. Together, they owned several properties in Colorado, probably the favorites being two condos in the Rocky Mountains above Denver and a two-story log house on 5 acres in the horse country outside Denver in Elizabeth, Colo.

They owned a total of three horses and two wild burros, along with an untold number of dogs and cats. Mountain trail rides, horse shows, downhill and cross-country skiing, boating and traveling rounded out their life until they both retired, finally settling in Florence.

Following their settling in Florence, Roxy became involved with the local chapter of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution.) With her passion for tracing family history rekindled, she established the existence of

an ancestor who had participated in the American Revolution. She continued her activities through the DAR until her illness made this impossible.

Although Alzheimer’s whittled away at Roxy’s mind and body, she never lost heart and held on with determination to her inherent “Roxy-ness” — her ability to make others laugh without even trying.

Roxy is survived by Juel Ann; her brother David (Robbie) Shope and his family in Iowa; and several cousins around Washington State and Montana.

A celebration of her life will held at St. Andrews Episcopal Church on Sept. 13, at 11 a.m.

If you wish, in lieu of flowers, please donate to the Alzheimer’s Association in Roxy’s name.

Burns’s Riverside Chapel Florence Funeral Home and Siuslaw Valley Crematory is in charge of all arrangements.

CERIDONO—Linda D. Ceridono, 70, of Florence, passed away Aug. 17, 2019.

Arrangements are being held by Burns’s Riverside Chapel Florence Funeral Home.

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