



Ruth Westrope, 91

March 10, 1922 - Nov. 27, 2013

Thomas "Pops" Westrope IV, 87

Sept. 24, 1921 - Oct. 15, 2008

LAMAR, CO — Thomas Westrope was born September 24, 1921 on a farm 5 miles east of Harlan the son of Thomas Westrope III and Ima Lana. Tom graduated from Harlan High School in 1939 and attended the University of Iowa for three and a half years. When World War II started, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in January 1942 and to service in January 1943. Tom attended flight school and graduated with his pilots wings in November 1943. Tom was transferred overseas in February 1944 where he flew many combat missions in the C-47. He flew paratroopers during the D-Day invasion and was shot down over France. This was 4 days after his first daughter, Linda was born. Tom was rescued by the French underground and stayed with them for three weeks until he was reunited with his troop carrier group in England. He was honorably discharged in July 1945 at which time he returned to Harlan.

Ruth Augusta Westrope was born March 10, 1922 in Harlan the daughter of August and Edna Levendahl. She grew up in a multi-generational, household, with her grandmother, who was an immigrant from Denmark. She graduated from Harlan High School and attended the University of Iowa for three years.

Tom and Ruth married May 8, 1943, while Tom was in the Army Air Corps flight school at Uvalde, TX. While Tom was flying combat missions in World War II, she returned to Harlan and lived with her parents and grandmother.

Upon his return home the couple moved to Iowa City where Tom attended Auctioneering School. After graduating, he was in the cattle auction business and ran the Harlan sale barn for many years. He also was an auctioneer in Humboldt and Carroll, Nebraska, Colorado, Texas and Kansas for many years. He was a champion auctioneer and rated as one of the best cattle auctioneers in the United States. The couples second daughter, Susan was born in March 1946 and son, Daniel was born in February 1951. Ruth and Thomas moved to Denver, CO, in 1963 and eventually moved to Lamar, CO, where they owned a small ranch and Tom continued in the auctioneering business. There they raised cattle and thoroughbred race horses. Growing up on a farm in Iowa helped shape his lifelong love of all animals, especially cattle, horses and dogs. Music was important in the couple's lives and they sang in the Harlan Congregational Church choir for many years. Tom also sang at weddings and funerals held at the church. Music was important to him and continued to give him joy, comfort and communication to the end of his life. Ruth also enjoyed music and played the bassoon in the high school and college bands in addition to playing the piano and organ. She especially loved playing the old time church hymns. Tom died October 15, 2008 at age 87. Ruth died Nov. 27, 2013 at age 91.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents and husband and son Daniel. Tom was preceded in death by his parents. The couple are survived by their children Susan and husband Roger Brownfield of Cape Coral, FL and Linda and husband Douglas Rasmussen of Woodbridge, VA and daughter-in-law Kathy Westrope of Greeley, CO; eight grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and five great-great grandchildren.

Graveside services will be held Friday, May 16, 2014 at 10 a.m. at the Harlan Cemetery with Pastor Donna Ewert of the Congregational United Church of Christ officiating.