



Rita M. Hildred

February 7, 1924 - November 26, 2017

Rita Hildred lived a beautiful life for 93 years. She was born in Greeley CO. She attended 14 different schools before her high school graduation from Ft. Collins High school.

She met her husband (Pete Hildred) when she was 14 years old when her sister and his brother were married. Pete and Rita married several years later, March 1, 1946. They spent a happy 57 years together until Pete's passing in 2004. They moved to "the family farm" in LaPorte CO in 1953 where they raised six amazing creative children. Rita kept an immaculate house. She easily shared her knowledge of sewing and cooking with numerous family and friends, including 4-H groups and notably taught a blind girl to knit. Rita also worked as a nurse, going back to school to study nursing as an adult in September 16, 1977 and went to work for Poudre Valley Hospital in April 1978 until she retired in April 1987. She purchased her first new car with cash, it was a red pickup truck. They had a camper made for it and Rita and Pete traveled the U.S. looking for the best pie.

Her faith shined brightly and love was apparent to anyone who came to "the farm". Her acceptance of all and hospitality was genuine. A sign in the family room said "You get 30 minutes and then you are a part of the family". That is how she lived her life and passed these ideas onto her children and grandchildren. Her deep faith was filled with this same feeling of camaraderie.

She could be found playing cards in the church basement with her lady friends, making christmas ornaments for the parish and her ever growing family. Quilting and handcrafts kept her always busy with the next project.

Her sewing legacy lives on in the quilting group of UFO'ers (UnfNished Objects), who affectionately dubbed her the "most honored matriarch" of the group. They will always remember her willingness to help solve problems with great ideas. When Rita spoke, everyone listened. Her kindness and attention to detail was inspirational, and "she really knew her way around a featherweight" sewing machine.

She kept beautiful gardens including roses and iris and various other flowers. Her raspberry patch and veggies were well tended and her green thumb bloomed with her epic house plants (that died as soon as they came to live at my house). Her pets were cherished members of the family and animals loved her.

She would cook an amazing meal for anyone and everyone who came to the farm. Known by all for her jars of home-made pickles stored neatly in the cellar. Anyone could treasure hunt to find a feast of leftovers from an amazing home cooked meal tucked in the refrigerator in reused plastic containers marked and remarked - once containing margarine or cool whip.

She was the original recycle and reuse queen. Her stacks of plastic containers all neatly organized will put any plastic storage system to shame. All scraps of food went to compost or to the chickens. If you were in the kitchen when it was full, she would send you out to empty the container. (Family meant you helped out - bloodline was not required.)

Rita played cards, religiously played cards. She usually won. She played her best no matter her opponent. (great grand children were not an exception).

She could count cards in multiple decks, and always remembered that “one more rule” as she did it. Everyone felt proud when they actually beat Rita and she would claim to be losing her mind.

She is survived by her six children, nine grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren. It would be remiss to not include all who had the pleasure to meet her, spend time at “the farm”, quilt with her, or play games like “Hand and Foot” with her. Her six children didn’t stray far as they all live in the state of Colorado and gather regularly at “Glutton Club”. Here a project may be completed, a tool may be built, or a card game may break out. During these gatherings there is always too much food and a great story with a family that genuinely like each other. This is a tribute to her as Rita and Pete set the tone for the family all these years. Anyone who knew her for even an afternoon, felt her strong warmth and passion for keeping a clean house (that may have skipped a generation or two as much as she tried to teach us to fold a fitted sheet into a perfect square). But the greatest gift she gave to all who knew her was her genuine kindness, smile, easy laugh and passion for helping anyone and everyone. We are so lucky to have known her and to have been loved by her.

Family memories:

Judy Barry (Daughter)

Mom taught me to sew and cook, crochet and knit. She tried to teach me to clean but I was never up to her standards, I still find it easier to feed a crowd than cook for one. She and dad encouraged me to follow my dreams and helped me become a nurse. She hosted my children in the summer as made wonderful memories staying on the farm. In her later years we shared a love of quilting, going to retreats, doing shared projects with our other quilting friends. She came and took care of me in 2010 when I had my shoulder

surgery and could not drive for a month, She beat me at cards more often than I beat her.

Stephanie Drew (Grand Daughter)

When I was so excited to show off the huge frog I caught at the farm and took it in to show grandma. The frog peed on me, I screamed and dropped the frog on to the floor. Grandma looked at me as if I were an idiot and told me to pick it up. Nothing fazed her.

When she had her cataracts removed and was less than thrilled at the cleanliness of her home and we had to go help her get it back to grandma clean.

One day Frosty (a cat) would not stay off the counter next to the fridge, and grandma had to kick the cat off numerous times. Then next morning grandma awoke to a mouse in her shoe. Afterwards, Frosty was allowed on the counter next to the fridge.

When Trevor (great-grandson) finally beat her at cards, and she complained that her brain was fading. She played her best no matter who her opponent was.

Gina Barry(Granddaughter)

I will always be grateful for summers at the farm as a kid. We spent a week every summer making mud pies, digging up crawdads in the pond, playing for hours in the tree house, making pillow forts and playing with toys from my mom's childhood. She always had a plastic cool whip container or butter tub we could use from the vast collection of perfectly stacked containers.

Grandma took me to see E.T. when I was little and couldn't figure out what to do with me as I cried for hours after the movie. I was so sad for that alien. She didn't understand why I was so upset.

Grandma played lots of cards in her life. She usually won. She could count cards in many decks and always remembered that one more rule... as she did it. Still we all played cards together often. And felt proud when we actually beat Grandma!

She was a strong amazing woman.

She liked things not just clean, but Grandma clean! Her pets were spoiled and her gardens were beautiful. She worked hard all her life. She loved reading the latest romance novel.

he learned to use the iPad and I would get emails telling me about a puzzle she had finished. I'm going to miss those emails.

As I decorated my tree this year, I held up all the years of ornaments created by Grandma, made from spools and yarn, and friendly plastic, recycled paper, beads and glitter. I am so grateful to have these pieces of history made by her hand. (I wish she had dated them)

These will forever remind me that to make something for someone, even from a pine cone and some paint, to take time, means way more to me than store bought.

I will never be as good at reusing plastic bags, but I recycle what I can. I will always be a "maker" like my Grandma taught me to be. And I hope I will occasionally win at cards. But sadly my cleaning will never be to her standards.

We will miss you so much Grandma. I love you and give Grandpa all our love when you find him.

Lisa Hildred (Granddaughter)

I was lucky enough to stay with her for a week about 9 years ago. As you can

imagine, we played a lot of cards. We cooked several kinds of chicken and rice. I still can't find one of the recipes we used, but it was soo good! One particular night we stayed up pretty late playing cards. She wasn't supposed to eat after a certain time for a blood draw the next morning, but we got so caught up in the game she went and grabbed a bag of bugles. About 10 minutes later, she was like, Lisa! Why'd you let me eat these? I honestly hadn't thought about it, but I couldn't say no to grandma and I never quite could tell her what to do. The next day we wandered around Ft Collins to her appointment and other errands. She would not let me drive, oh no! I don't remember many other details, but I cherish that time with her one on one.

Jeannette Brown (Granddaughter)

I love my Grandmother. She touched my life in a huge way. She accepted me just as I was even as I grew and changed. As I remember her I think of a great woman who faithfully lived her life day by day in little things. I remember the joy of opening her gum drawer. The smell overwhelms my memories of this woman whos small deeds made the best, most beautiful quilt of her life. It would have blocks of roses that she cared for, mullan that she pulled, walks along the lane, swim class, mass, cards and a raspberry patch.

I remember picking raspberries with her. Then when visiting, I'd be gently woken by homey sounds from the kitchen. She and Grandpa would be starting the day preparing breakfast. I think they enjoyed their mornings. They would then welcome me into the kitchen and new day. I would get to remember the sweetness of the time at harvest even as I tasted the sweetness of my Grandpa's pancakes topped with the raspberries my Grandmother had prepared for the table. I remember going into town, just her and I, to pick fabric for another outfit she was making for me. She also picked up the next month's quilt block. She started me on my sewing journey. She taught me how to sew and how to rip seams.

I love that Grandma welcomed me into her life and took me along showering me with little loving blessings along the way. Thank you Grandma, for your example, love, care, fun and challenge. You were a great woman and I'm so thankful you were my Grandma. I love you.

Maggie Callicrate (Neice)

Our visits to the farm for the annual family reunion were special days. I remember playing at the river, helping to churn (and eat!) fabulous homemade ice cream, and most importantly, the warmth of the Hildred clan. I have never met a more loving, kind and generous family. My thoughts, prayers and love are with you all. Aunt Rita will always hold a special place in my heart.

Michelle Roepke (family friend)

Your grandmother was an amazing woman she always treated me as one of her own and through all of the problems I had with my mom I felt better knowing Rita was in my life. To my older kids she was grandma Rita and Pete was "Papa Pete" I will miss her wisdom and quiet words of encouragement. She was a beautiful woman with a very loving soul!

Carla Hildred Graham (Niece)

When I was really little, maybe 3 or 4 years old, she would push me in the swing and cheer when I giggled about how high I was going. She would make sandwiches for Lisa, Mark, Barbara, Andy, Joellen and me when we played in the tree house in the summertime.

Aunt Rita always made us feel that her home was our home. And "chicken harvest" ... oh my! She stood by my side and taught me how to pluck the feathers, and then finished them for me because I could never get them all.

I learned to ice skate on the pond. Aunt Rita was waiting with hot cocoa when everyone came back to the house, frozen to the bone. She loved us all as

much as we loved her. She will be in my heart forever.

Sheena Malone Crider (granddaughter)

I remember all of those days at the farm, the card games & puzzles. The stacks of margarine dished in the refrigerator was like a Treasure hunt to find the one with what you were looking for in it. As for her cleaning.....I can NEVER get a fitted sheet to be a perfect square, she tried very hard to teach me.... I'm still working on it.

Alice Callicrate Bair (Niece)

I have such precious memories of Aunt Rita and the Farm. As kids we would be filled with joy on the way to visit her and the family. She was truly a Proverbs 31 woman and I will hold her memory dear for always and forever.

Mike Callicrate (Nephew)

The Hildreds, including Aunt Rita, made lasting impacts on my life and inspired my passion for family farm agriculture. Grateful!

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Larimer County Food Bank or Salvation Army.

Previous Events

Rosary

DEC 10. 7:00 PM (MT)

St. Joseph Catholic Church
300 W. Mountain Ave. Fort Collins, CO 80521
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Mass of Christian Burial

DEC 11. 2:00 PM (MT)

Saint Joseph Catholic Church
101 N Howes St
Fort Collins, CO 80521
(970) 482-4148

Committal Service

DEC 12. 11:30 AM (MT)

Fort Logan National Cemetery
3698 S. Sheridan Blvd. Denver, CO US 80235
Denver, CO 80235

Tribute Wall

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“ *Grandma Rita was a spiritual anchor for me. I could believe in my faith as strongly as I did (especially as a child in a home where no one else believed) because she was there, believing right along with me. After we moved away from Colorado, she came to visit and took me to church--a rare and precious occurrence back then, which I treasured deeply. I remember feeling alive in a way I didn't anywhere else, praying with her. I didn't realize how much of an anchor she has continued to be for me (despite our physical distance) until now.*

Rebecca Roepke - December 09, 2017 at 09:35 AM