



Herbert William Carls October 31, 1919 – June 25, 2017

Herbert (affectionately known as “Herb”) was born on the family farm 8 miles northeast of Yuma, Colorado on Halloween Day (Oct. 31st, 1919). His family had homesteaded there since 1913. Most of Herb’s formal education took place at a small country school about 2 miles from home, but to complete his remaining education he (and several brothers) attended St. John’s Lutheran School in town. To avoid a long daily commute the boys stayed with their grandparents during the week and on weekends would return home. That also allowed their grandparents a break from several very active boys.

With the death of Herb’s Grandmother Lensert in 1932, the completion of his 8th grade education in 1933, and the increased severity of dust storms on the homestead, the family decided to move all the way to California. It was a difficult decision but one that Herb’s mother Bertha had insisted upon for her family. In late 1936 the family took a train from Yuma to Denver, and then rode a Greyhound bus to Pomona (where other family members already lived). Instead of attending high school there, Herb worked various jobs to help support his family. This was during the later days of the Depression era.

Prior to World War II Herb volunteered to become a parachutist, but didn’t have the educational background required at the time and was turned down. All that changed when America entered the War. In January of 1942 he was drafted and soon achieved his goal of becoming an Army paratrooper. He never could explain his desire to jump out of a perfectly good airplane. He received his military training at Camp Wolters, Texas, Fort Benning, Georgia, Camp Rucker, Alabama and Fort Bragg, North Carolina. When training was completed he was shipped to England on the HMS Queen Elizabeth and became a proud member of the 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment. During his military service Herb served with other distinguished paratroop outfits, including the 502nd and 503rd Battalions, as well as the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, but his first allegiance was always with the 509th. He eventually saw action in North Africa, Italy, Southern France, Belgium, and Germany, with major involvements at Salerno and Anzio, Italy, Le Muy, France, the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, and in crossing the Elbe River into Germany. When the War in Europe officially ended on May 8, 1945, Herb’s outfit remained in the area of Hamburg, Germany as part of the occupation forces. He was officially released from service in June of 1945 and returned to civilian life once again.

Once Herb returned home he worked for a time at the Pomona Paper Mill, then relocated to Mammoth Lakes, California where he operated a ski lodge and became a tour guide for back country trips into the High Sierra mountains. Some of his well-known clients were actor John Wayne and his sons, actor Bob Cummings, and radio and television personality Art Linkletter. In 1969 he married Norma Patterson, the love of his life and worked for many years with the U.S. Forest Service. He loved his time with the Forest Service but ended up retiring due to a work related injury. Soon afterwards Herb and Norma moved to the Klamath Falls, Oregon area and later purchased a 20 acre ranch near Merrill, Oregon (which is close to the California/Oregon border). Herb worked with quarter horses on his ranch into his 80's when previous wartime and work related injuries began slowing him down significantly. In 2002 Norma passed away which left a huge hole in his life. They had been soul mates for so long it was as if life had lost much of its meaning.

Even into his early 90's Herb still traveled from Oregon to California with his pet dog and truck and 5th wheel trailer. In 2012 at the age of 92, Herb's sister Eileen finally convinced him it was unsafe to live alone on his ranch. With family helping to make the move, he returned to Southern California one last time. Selling the Carls ranch was one of the hardest things he'd ever do, it meant that much to him. The ranch house stood high on a hill overlooking his pastureland. The Carls ranch had become such an integral part of his life, leaving it was almost too much to bear. For a cowboy who loved his land, and the friends he made in Oregon, he felt it was a sign his days were numbered. But the good Lord had a different plan for him. Herb managed to carry on for nearly another 4 years, living close-by to his sister at an assisted living facility. On Sunday June 25, 2017 he was called home to be with his Savior, with his sister and nephew at his side. It was a remarkable life of 97 years, 7 months, and 26 days, and the longest of any Carls family member (exceeding cousin Erwin Carls who previously lived to be 96 years, 6 months and 24 days).

Herb is survived by his one remaining sibling, his sister Eileen Klonsick, and a number of nephew's and niece's.

A "Celebration of Life" service has been planned for July 14, 2017 at 11:30 AM. The service will be at Trinity Lutheran Church located at 5080 Kingsley Street in Montclair, California. A luncheon will be served immediately following the service. Interment of Herb's cremated remains will take place at a later date (at Pomona Cemetery) where other family members are located. If you wish to be informed of a date/time for Herb's military "Honors Ceremony" (tentatively to be held in September or October), please contact his nephew Wayne Carls.

In lieu of flowers or personal memorials, the family suggests a donation be made to Lutheran Hour Ministries, 660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, Saint Louis, MO 63141, or call (800) 876-9880. Please specify your gift is "in memory of Herbert Carls".