

Obituary

Gloria Dillard, 88



Gloria Nadine LaRocque Dillard, 88, of Blackfoot, passed away Wednesday, June 3, 2010 at her home.

She was born August 8, 1921 in Riverside, Idaho. She was the daughter of Ferry Ernest LaRocque and Florence Rummell LaRocque. Her parents moved to Whittier, California when she was a child. She spent her summers with her grandmother, Martha LaRocque at Riverside in the late '20's. In California, her father was employed with Getty Oil Company of Signal Hill, California. Gloria graduated from Whittier High and later attended Fullerton Junior College.

At the beginning of WWII, she returned to Walla Walla, Washington to work for the Walla Walla Union Bulletin. In 1945, she returned to the family home in Blackfoot. She began her longtime career with the local newspaper in September 1945.

She met Donald "Herm" Dillard upon his return from the service in the Army Air Corps and they were married a year later, in 1946, at the Methodist Church in Idaho Falls.

Although she worked in many other careers, she always maintained a close affiliation with her first work-love, the now named Morning News. Over the years, she returned as a 'trouble-shooter' and special edition worker for the News.

She assisted in the growth of KBLI Radio from 1956 to 1965. In addition to managing KBLI Radio Station, she managed KTLE TV, Channel 6, in Pocatello, Idaho. In the late '60's, she took over management of KSKI Radio Station in Sun Valley, Idaho. Gloria is quoted as saying, "I never had a job that I didn't love, I was lucky." In 1967, she resigned her career in the media to become a professional artist. She worked as a realist painter in oils, and later in water color, specializing in Idaho high country landscape and in florals.

In 1976, she accepted a position as coordinator for a first time program to be initiated in the Blackfoot School District to support Traditional Indian Art and Crafts. The purpose of these classes was for Indian Students to become aware of and learn the diminishing tribal art heritage and traditions. With a co-funded grant from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the National Endowment of the Arts, talented Indian Elders were hired to come to the schools and guest teach Indian students in special classes. Gloria was honored for her efforts and skills in this program by being presented with the Governors Award for contribution to the Arts and Humanities of Idaho. She was also the recipient of many awards during her life dedicated to work in public service programs for the city and county as well as the state of Idaho. She often commented that her experiences and acquaintance with all the close Indian friends, families and students gave special meaning to her life. Her 35 years of paintings produced works that are shown now in homes, businesses and galleries across the nation.

She loved a good joke, a funny story, fishing with Herm, Jane and Emily, rock hunting, wildflower sightseeing, traveling with Herm to photograph the Idaho scenery for her painting, following the wild horses up Spar Canyon, and just enjoying the great outdoors in her 'beloved' Idaho.

She is preceded in death by her beloved husband of 57 years, Donald Pierce Dillard, by her parents and younger sister, Zoann McCane

She is survived by her children: son, Craig (Linda) Dillard, of Palouse, Washington, daughter, Lynn Dayton, of Blackfoot and 'son of the heart' Willie Preacher, of Blackfoot; four grandchildren, Kristina Dillard, Wendy Dillard Darling, Bryan Roberts, Randy Dayton and seven great grandchildren, Maya Turner, Kamri Dayton, Riley Dayton, David Moses Darling, Savannah Nimmons Roberts, Landon Dayton and Zachary Lyon Blue (on the way).

In accordance with her wishes cremation was under the direction of Hawker Funeral Home. A memorial service will be announced for later in August to allow time for her vast loving following to assemble.