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Russell Hilton Oberg

Dec 31, 2009



Russell Hilton “Russ” Oberg, pioneer Alaska resident, died peacefully in his sleep Dec. 16 at the age of 92. A celebration of life will be held at the United Methodist Church of Chugiak on Jan. 9 at 3 p.m.

Russ was born to Carl and Hazel Oberg Dec. 9, 1917 in Provo, Utah, and grew up in Southerland, Utah, and Baggs, Wyo. Drafted into the Army in the fall of 1941, he served until the end of World War II. Upon his discharge from the Army, he returned to Baggs, married Elsie Herold on June 18, 1946, and briefly ran a small business there.

In 1949 he traveled up the Alcan to work on the construction phase of Anchorage International Airport, installing runway lights. In 1950 he returned to Alaska with Elsie and daughters Sheryll and Vonda. Russ and Elsie claimed an 80-acre homestead in Chugiak, where they resided together for the next 30 years until Elsie's death in 1977. In addition to farming and working a Civil Service job at the refrigeration plant on Elmendorf, he helped raise six children and remained an active volunteer in the community. Although Russ wore many hats throughout his lifetime, he was a farmer at heart and it has long been a family joke that "we will have to find a way to bury that John Deere tractor with him."

In 1986, Russ met Harriet Feldman, the second love of his life. They were married March 9, 1992, and spent their golden years together. Russ is survived by his wife of 17 years, Harriet Oberg; daughter Vonda Nixon; daughters and sons-in-law Sheryll and Dave Reger, Diane and Bill Sullivan, Valda and John Tanner, Jeanie and Dee McKinney; son and daughter-in-law Lyle and Leah Oberg; step-daughters and step-sons, Beth and James Sampson, Debra and Bud Rosson, and Brian Feldman. He is also survived by brothers and sisters-in-law Clyde and June Oberg, Dee and Dixie Oberg, and sister Wanda Hartner.

He leaves behind numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by wife Elsie, brother Dallon, sister Thelma, son-in-law Steve Nixon, and grandsons Clifton Sullivan and Clinton Reger.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Chugiak Lions Club at P. O. Box 670684 Chugiak, AK 99567.