

Bonnors Ferry Herald, Thursday, June 19, 2008

Blanche Rogerson Hobbs, 91

Former Boundary County resident Blanche Rogerson Hobbs, 91, passed away Saturday, June 14, 2008, at Hillcrest Manor in Sunnyside, Wash.

Blanche was born June 30, 1916, in Porthill to Sarah and Reginald Rogerson. She was a great-granddaughter of Dr John McLoughlin of Oregon History through the lineage of his son, David and Annie Grizzley, of the Ojibawa/Cree and the Kootenai Indian Tribes of northern Idaho and Canada.

At 16, Blanche trained in Bonnors Ferry to be a telephone operator, which meant plugging and connecting all calls through a manual switchboard. Working the night shift, she had a cot behind the switchboard, where she could sleep between calls.

Blanche then went to the telephone company in Cheney, Wash., where she met and married Jesse Hobbs in 1941.

With World War II raging, they moved to Seattle, where Jesse worked in the shipyards and Blanche was a telephone operator at Frederick & Nelson.

Following the war, when the Alaska frontier opened, they moved to Anchorage in the spring of 1947, where she worked for the U. S. Government. Blanche became a communications specialist for the General Services Administration and supervised all switchboards in the Army bases in Alaska, flying with bush pilots from base to base.

She returned to Seattle in the fall of 1950 and retired from government service in August 1978. Her retirement years were spent traveling with her husband until he died.

Then Blanche took up ceramics and was famous among family for her beautiful lighted ceramic Christmas trees.

Her parents, a sister and a brother precede her in death.

Blanche is survived by a nephew, Herb McLaughlin of Hayden and nieces Bernadean Barrett and her husband, Dick of Centralia, Wash., Jerrydean Mercer and her husband, Bruce, of Sunnyside, and Shirley Gianelli and her husband, John of Stockton, Calif.

Father Carlos Perez of St. Anne's Catholic Church will preside at a graveside service at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 28, at the cemetery in Porthill.