



Deane William Copping

November 20, 1927 - May 13, 2011

Glendive, Montana: Deane William Copping, age 83 passed away on Thursday, January 20, 2011 at the Eastern Montana Veteran's Home in Glendive. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 11:00 A.M. on Friday, May 13, 2011 in the Chapel of the Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Interment with military honors will be held in the Dawson County Cemetery in Glendive. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements. Deane was born to George William and Myra Deane (Wiley) Copping in Glendive on November 20, 1927. He attended Washington Elementary School and graduated from Dawson County High School where he lettered in football all four years. Deane worked on several farms and ranches before enlisting in the United States Army in 1951. He served as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne until his honorable discharge in 1953. His main occupation was always ranching, plus some time spent bartending and working on oil rigs. Deane loved rodeo, playing pinochle at the Trail Star, and telling jokes! Always willing to help others, he spent many hours and traveled many miles to help young people who were beginning their rodeo competitions. He was a member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. Deane suffered a stroke in 2006 and spent his remaining days at the Eastern Montana Veteran's Home. A recent highlight of his life was the recognition given him at the 2010 Dawson County Fair Rodeo. He was a COWBOY! He was preceded in death by his parents, a sister Almira Bedor and a brother Chuck. Survivors include his

sister Katherine Hardie of Cheney, Washington, his sister-in-law Delores Copping of Glendive, numerous nieces, nephews and many, many friends. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com Eulogy: There is a bit of cowboy poetry called "Of Horses and Men" written by Jay Snider and the last verse reads, "Sometimes simple words seem best When final words we choose, He dern sure was a good one He's the kind you hate to lose." Deane William Copping was for "dern sure" one of those good men and true cowboys we hate to lose. Deane was honest, sincere, and outspoken, you always knew where you stood with Deane. A nephew, Clint, termed Deane as being extremely independent. There was never a clock that could lasso him. He might be an hour late or three days late. The only time frame that meant anything to Deane might have been those few important seconds during a rodeo event. Deane was competitive and liked to do things by his own rules, just ask those who played cards with him. What carried him through his day and throughout his life was his enormous sense of humor, and that special twinkle in his eyes as he would spin his stories or entertain you with his slightly off-colored jokes. Deane loved to see the reactions he could get from young and old alike. Deane could always be counted on to lend a hand or be helpful in any way he could. Deane was just a good man. The third of four children, Deane had two sisters and a brother. He grew up and was educated in Glendive. His sister, Kate, recalls that Deane really didn't like school. Kate was in the second grade when Deane entered first grade. Their mother would walk them the two blocks to school each morning. When recess time came, Deane was ready to be done, and would walk the two blocks down the alley, home. The only way Deane would stay in school was when the teachers would take Kate out of her class, have her bring her work and sit with Deane in his class. In high school, Deane lettered all four years in football, playing the position of fullback, and was part of a state championship team. It was also during this time in high school that Deane found his niche in life. He discovered horses and cattle, and the life of a cowboy. Deane, and his brother Chuck, although town boys, found their first

jobs working on area ranches. For Deane, it was to become a way of life. Kate remembers when she was working on a ranch about 8 miles out. The ranch owner enlisted her help in driving a team of horses and a rake, something Kate had never done. Things were going along just fine and then Kate dropped the left rein, but managed to hang onto the right one. She pulled hard on that one rein, causing the horses to run in a circle. Kate yelled for help. Help came, and ended the scary incident. This was before phones, and Deane was 10 miles away from where she was working, but he had heard the story of her mishap, and Kate could hear him laughing long before he met her at the door of their house. After high school, Deane continued to work on area farms and ranches. He and brother Chuck kept busy on the area rodeo circuit. Deane was a bulldogger and loved the rodeo life. When Chuck married and stopped competing on the circuit, Deane continued his involvement in rodeo. Deane would tell how back then you wanted to take 2nd place because 1st place had to pay for the party afterward, while 2nd place could go to the party and keep all his winnings. It was during his younger days that Deane sported long, reddish blonde hair and a big bushy beard. He was quite a sight, looking more like a lumberjack than a cowboy. One rodeo announcer even noted that Deane was the only cowboy on the circuit with a ponytail. Clint says that when the hippie movement came about, Deane quickly cut off the hair and beard, not wanting to be mistaken for one of them! He would rather have been seen as the rodeo cowboy he was. Deane was a proud member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. Deane spent his entire life in the Glendive/Richey area, except for the two years after he enlisted in the United States Army, following in his big brother, Chuck's, footsteps. Deane went to infantry school in Fort Benning, Georgia. From there, Deane proudly served as a paratrooper, just as Chuck had done, until he was honorably discharged in 1953 to the reserves. After his discharge, Deane returned to Richey, bought some cows, leased land to run the cows on, and lived the life of the bachelor cowboy. He would stay out on ranches, running his cattle, helping other

ranchers and their families. In his spare time, he instructed young people interested in competing in rodeo. He shared his experiences and knowledge, his time and his love of rodeo helping many high school competitors. Deane would spend his summer nights teaching kids about bulldogging. He would travel with them to rodeos, including National Finals, at his own expense, provide good horses for them to ride, haze steers for them. Not only did Deane love rodeo, he greatly enjoyed young people. One duty he would do while living on Baker's ranch was to bring Lucille Baker into town to get her hair done once a week and then pick her up. This was when he still had long hair and the beard. One of these times, as he was walking to the beauty shop to pick Lucille up, the hairdresser's small son spotted Deane and went tearing into the shop yelling to his mother "Jesus is here." You can bet that Deane got a big chuckle out of that! Sometimes Deane would work as a bartender or on the oil rigs. Deane himself never drank liquor, but he sure had many stories from his job as a bartender. Those were not his favorite jobs, but he would say that he needed to work to support his cattle. Deane never owned any land, but always leased. He did have his own brand, "101", of which he was very proud. You could find his 101 brand on the right shoulder of his horses, and on the left hip of his cattle. Deane lived his life as a bachelor. It wasn't that he didn't like women and they him, but he just couldn't be tied down to a schedule. There was one woman he was seriously interested in and always regretted not paying better attention too, but he was just too much of a free spirit to realize it at the time, and she moved on. But for not having a wife and children of his own, Deane was very close to the family he had, his sister Kate and brother Chuck and Chuck's wife, Delores, and their families. Deane's nephew, Clint, or Clinter as Deane called him, grew up in Glendive, and he and Deane shared many times and experiences together. Kate's children lived in Washington and would come about once a year to visit. Common experiences with Uncle Deane for all the nieces and nephews included memories of horseback riding on Baker's ranch, and going to rodeos, and of the many stories and jokes Uncle Deane told to make them laugh. Niece Linda

remembers the tales Deane would weave with that twinkle in his eye, and how with his wonderful sense of humor he could make everyone laugh! Nephew David tells that Deane just “made an impression” on you. He was both fun and funny! Niece Anita says you could tell he liked kids and she noticed how he was always willing to help others. A memory that stands out for nephew Mark was when Mark was about seven. They were riding in Deane’s truck and Deane pulled out his chew and put a wad into his mouth. Mark, naturally curious, asked if that was chewing gum Uncle Deane had. Deane said “yup” and offered the chew to Mark. That cured Mark of ever using tobacco products, chewing or smoking! Nephew Larry, as a youngster, idolized his cowboy hero, Uncle Deane. His earliest and favorite memory is from when he was about 3 or 4 years old and would stay with Uncle Deane. They would get up early in the morning, and Uncle Deane had a red plastic razor for Larry to shave with, and they would start their day together doing this manly task. Clint’s daughter, Breanna, remembers visiting her grandparents, and Deane was always there. He was the only one who ever called her “Pumpkin.” And everyone, relatives and many others called Deane “Uncle Deane.” One of Deane’s greatest accomplishments in life was the delight he was to young children, and the teacher and mentor he was to many teenagers and young adults over the years. Deane was a simple man. His pleasures were simple also. There were of course his cows, and he really appreciated a good horse. A black hat and a good saddle were important. Once, on a trip to Vegas, Deane was wearing a black hat with a bite taken out of the brim. A lady in one of the casinos offered to buy the hat for \$300. Deane said no but wondered why she would pay that for his hat. She told Deane that she saw many hats but his looked like it was actually used. Deane enjoyed his chewing tobacco and junk food. If provided with a good meal, he certainly would enjoy that, but there were many times he would have what he called “ a snicker sandwich.” And his chew was always right there. As a young man, Deane decided he wanted to learn how to dance. Chuck and Delores were just getting to know each other, and Deane and Chuck spent a great deal of time at the Runway

Inn, a drive-in café owned and ran by Delores' mother, Dorothy. Now the Runway Inn had a jukebox and small dance floor, and Deane would come out near to closing time to do dishes and help clean up. In return he enlisted Dorothy to teach he and Chuck to dance. Chuck really didn't care for it, but Deane really enjoyed dancing, and continued to dance throughout his life. Deane mastered the craft of braiding strong and colorful ropes and keychains. Some he would sell, most he gave to family and friends. He was very proud of his aptitude for trimming horses hooves. Displayed today is a coat rack crafted by Deane made from horseshoes. Two favorite pleasures of Deane's were playing cards and talking to people. He was a master of telling stories and jokes, new ones everyday. Deane stole many a kiss and made many women blush with his trick jokes and off colored stories. Deane considered himself one of the best BS'ers in Richey, but he would say that he needed to sometimes come into Glendive to practice and get schooled. A common stomping ground of Deane's, for both cards and swapping stories, was the Trail Star casino and restaurant in Glendive. For twenty years he was a regular in the mornings. He'd have coffee and get together with a group of friends to play pinochle. Deane was the one who taught them the game, and how to lie and cheat. The game was always played by Deane's rules, and even now that he's gone, his friends laugh and say they still lie and cheat and play by his rules! Deane taught them well. Before and after the cards, Deane might help his good friend, Cindy, the manager at the Trail Star. He might bartend, and he rolled a million pieces of silverware over the years. And of course, the stories never stopped. He would share his jokes and tricks with total strangers who would come in to pay for gas, eat or play the machines. Deane also kept all the knives and scissors sharpened. Deane was a craftsman at sharpening knives and did it for many people over the years. He carried a stone in his pick-up and was always ready to do that job for anyone who needed it. Cindy was a good friend to Deane, sometimes taking him to doctors' appointments in Helena. But Deane, being Deane, couldn't resist

getting Cindy with his jokes. On one visit, Deane was supposed to go into the hospital for tests. When they were headed for Helena, Cindy wanted to be sure that Deane had a room for her to stay in while he went into the hospital. He assured her he did. Well, upon arriving, Deane wasn't scheduled to go into the hospital until the next morning and there was only one room available. So they were going to have to share a room. Cindy was not happy! But she would make it work; there were two beds. Just as she was falling asleep, she heard Deane say, "Lil darlin', if I felt better, I'd come over there." Age and health never stopped Deane from showing his "frisky" side! And of course, Deane couldn't wait to relate an embellished tale of this event to all their friends back at the Trail Star. Another time, Cindy waited for Deane in the car, while he talked to the doctor. Suddenly a nurse appeared at the car window. Deane had sent her out to tell "his wife" everything the doctor had said. Even though there were times Deane thoroughly exasperated her, Cindy and Deane were good friends. It was hard not to like Deane. Deane was not materialistic. The only things he ever owned were his cows, his horses, and his vehicles. His nephew, Mark, termed his uncle a free-spirit who set an example by doing what he enjoyed in life. Deane's life lesson about the importance of doing what makes you happy inspired Mark to own a farm, complete with horses. Deane believed in earning everything he wanted, and that included his friends. Deane was a friend to many, and he made many friends during his lifetime. They were his greatest possession. A highlight of Deane's life was a trip he went on with the Baker boys. The trip included Arizona, Nevada, California, Oregon, and Washington. Deane's father had once driven a stagecoach, and they followed the stagecoach route that he had driven, including seeing and taking photos of the turn-around barn for the stagecoaches. They stopped at Kate's on their way home, and she remembers how excited Deane was to have seen all of that. They also stopped in Helena for a doctors' appointment on the way home. It was there, right in front of the hospital, that Deane suffered a stroke. That signaled the end of his independence. Deane became a resident of the Eastern Montana

Veteran's Home. The stroke took away his ability to talk. He might know what he wanted to say, but he couldn't express it vocally. But as Breanna says, Deane never lost that special twinkle in his eyes. Deane learned other ways to communicate. One example was when Clint and Delores had to talk to him about selling his horses. Deane understood what they were saying, and also understood that it was time. He made the decision by waving his hand goodbye to his horses. Deane William Copping died January 20, 2011. He was a brother, a brother-in-law, an uncle, and a friend. Deane was "darn sure" a true Cowboy and a good man; he will be greatly missed.

Tribute Wall



“ *Deane William Copping*

December 07, 2022 at 04:10 PM