

Hendershot, Tom J. 2010

Kennewick, Wash.

Tom J. Hendershot of Kennewick, passed away suddenly on July 3, 2010. He was born September 15, 1922, to Arthur and Helen Hendershot in Kilgore, Nebraska. He was the second child but first to live past infancy placing him in the role as the eldest of six siblings. He spent his childhood on a cattle ranch in Nebraska where he still could see the remains of his grandfather's sod house from when they first homesteaded as pioneers.

Tom attended school in several one-room schoolhouses; Plumbrush, Lone Prairie, and the ABC School. In 1934, after losing the ranch due to drought and the depressions, his dad traded the 'orneriest horse ever' for a 28 Chevy and brought the entire family out to Washington where they began the itinerant lifestyle between California, Oregon and Washington of picking hops, cotton, fruit and working wheat and sugar beet harvest.

They based themselves in Granger where in 1942 he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and served during WWII. Tom completed basic training in Texas then to Geiger Field in Spokane and on to Glasgow AFB, Montana for Advanced Flight Training. He was in the 385th Heavy Bombardment group in the 549th squadron. On July 2, 1943 he shipped out from New Jersey on the 'Queen Lizzy,' as the guys called it, which had been converted as a troop transport ship. He was based at Stowmarket Airbase, England and later to the continent saying Austria was the most beautiful country he'd ever seen.

In England he married Josephine and had two sons. Later they divorced. He married Arlyn Kendall of Benton City on June 5, 1957. They had five children. In the mid 60s the family moved to Whitstran (Prosser), WA where Tom worked for Leon Dufault for 17 years as an irrigator on the hop ranch and then for John Dell until his retirement. In the mid 1980s, Tom and Arlyn relocated to Kennewick, WA.

He is preceded in death by his parents and four brothers. He is survived by his wife Arlyn of 53 years, and his sisters Ella and Shirley. He is survived also by his children; Jim (Sherry) Hendershot of Benton City, Kenneth Hendershot of Pasco, Mike Hendershot of Prosser, Diane (Ken) Leist of Benton City, Annette (Ed) Gooldy of Prosser, Sharon (Andy) Hamilton of Umatilla, OR and Karen Hendershot of Kennewick. He had sixteen grandchildren, Jeff, Jamie, Tim, Kenneth, Daniel, Amanda, Randy, Carin, Ray, Michael, Mariah, Emily, Laura, McKaylin, Rider, and Reighlyn, as well as five great-grandchildren and extended family and friends.

Funeral service at Hillcrest Bruce Lee 2804 W. Lewis St. Thursday July 8, 11 a.m. followed by graveside service at Columbia Memorial Park.

To sign the online guestbook, please go to [www.HillcrestBruceLee.com](http://www.HillcrestBruceLee.com).

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