Delpha Abbott

February 15, 1928 ~ November 3, 2016

Our beloved mother and grandmother, Delpha Abbott (February 15, 1928 to November 3, 2016), died peacefully in her sleep with her daughter at her side. She ended this life as most of us hope we can do; passing on in her sleep after having achieved advanced age while in the company of loving family.

Delpha was survived by four children; Alpha, Rick, Terry (now-deceased), and Larry, in addition to numerous grand-children and great-grand children.

Delpha was as rough-and-tumble a character as ever walked the Salt Lake valley, surviving a childhood few would have endured. Fellow survivors of that trauma were brothers Victor, Burt and Bob Blanchfield, as well as a sister, Lilly, who didn\t last through to adulthood.

Before her twentieth birthday, World War II both gave and lost her a husband, which provided her the experience of gaining a daughter while also losing her mother.

Delpha rebounded, marrying a man who embraced her daughter as his own, but who was shortly there-after killed on the job, leaving Delpha with two more children, one who lived and one who did not.

Instead of cracking under the grief of this extreme trial, the young woman doubled-down on her determination, rolling the experience into a personal tenacity she maintained her entire life. This was a liberated woman, not through the permission of others but by the drive of her will. Alone with two tiny children, she started over.

Marrying again, this time to Wayne Wilkins, two more sons followed. After the boys matured, the couple made an amicable split, remaining on friendly terms until separated by death.

She found life-long love with an engineer and musician, Norman Abbott. They were an apt couple, with her fiery disposition tempered by his calm and steady bearing. Norm died of emphysema in 1990.

Truly unsinkable, Delpha emerged from the ashes of tragedy prepared to live life to its fullest, including working with the handicapped and financially succeeding as an entrepreneur in business. She succeeded as both a tailor and alterations expert while simultaneously running a boarding house for men, who learned that there were two ways to live under her charge; fly straight or be gone. Regardless of her strict rule, she never limited her compassion to those of any particular orientation, wholly rejecting all forms of social prejudice. Instead, she chose to affect change by metering out instruction and correction to every person in every situation (requested or not) with the kind of practical, straight talk only a sore-tested veteran of life can provide.

Into her 70s, when many women are winding down into rocking chairs on porches, Delpha filled her time by taking up ball room dancing. When that endeavor wound down she found pleasure in devouring novels and fitting together intricate puzzles.

Delpha\s fate wound \round a fortunate corner when she aligned forces with a calm and patient man named Roger Morfin. According to Delpha, "one day a little piece of Heaven opened and Roger dropped down through it and in to our lives." No friend ever had a better support system than Delpha had with Roger, and no extended family could have appreciated more the way in which he preserved and protected her independence and dignity. Roger\s style of leadership has been to stay in the shadows through the planning phase of a project before stepping up to lead from the front once a course is charted.

Delpha\s house was her castle and the community base camp for an extended group of loved ones and in-laws. She vowed never to leave while living, and with the devoted care of Roger, kept that vow until a fire swept through her residence last week.

Delpha enjoyed toiling in the sun, and kept both a flower and vegetable garden, along with a manicured lawn. When her body would no longer stand the effort she was assisted by Roger, neighbors, and the community saint, one Harold Harris.

She also loved little lap dogs that she sculpted with food until they achieved the desired body shape of a football. Roger attempted to counter the trend by walking the weight off the animals, but it was an ongoing and relentless contest.

Regardless of location or sacrifice involved, Grandma Abbott showed up for any and every family event. If the occasion merited customized attire, she could create the work by hand. As well, one could count on Delpha to restore order to any stalled activity.

Mrs. Abbott fit the bill as a survivor\s survivor. Like many depression babies, she never took her next meal for granted, saving coins, buttons, seeds and anything else she felt might be needed if the lights didn\t come on the next day. The lady made her own luck, and approached challenge with rolled-up sleeves and the work ethic of a hand-cart driver.

Before death, Delpha fulfilled a goal of her youth, to take out endowments and attend the Mormon temple. Though capable of embracing everyone, Delpha treasured the love and compassion displayed by her largely Mormon neighborhood, whom her daughter had embraced as a youth.

Even though she was eighty-eight years old, it has been said that some expected her to outlive us all. We miss who and what she was, that being the ablest soldier of our clan and the beating heart of our collective. We who follow after are stuck somewhere between shock and personal devastation.

The services are Wednesday, November 9th at Larkin Sunset lawn at 2350 east and 1300 south. There will be a viewing at noon, followed by services at 2pm.