

March 26, 2010

## The life of Ruth Stedman



- Ruth Margaret Jones Stedman was born April 7, 1917 in Winnett, Montana. She was the oldest of five children born to Franklin and Lydia (Krueger) Jones. Upon her grandfather's death, her parents inherited the family farm, and Ruth's family relocated to Verdon, SD. Ruth attended country school in Verdon, but later moved to Groton to live with her grandmother. She graduated from Groton High School in 1935. She then attended Northern Normal in Aberdeen, SD and received an elementary school teaching certificate.

- Ruth always noted that she was born on a Saturday and, according to a popular song, "Saturday's child works for a liv

ing." Work she did. After graduation from college, she taught school in Verdon. When her younger sister contracted tuberculosis and was hospitalized at the sanatorium near Custer, SD, Ruth moved to Custer to be closer to her sister. She taught school at the Sanator school and later worked in the office at the sanatorium.

- While living in Custer, she met Dean Stedman. Dean and Ruth were married in 1944 while Dean was serving in Navy. After Dean was discharged from the Navy in 1945, he and Ruth moved to Los Angeles where Dean attended photography school and Ruth worked as a secretary.. In 1950, Dean and Ruth moved to Gregory and managed Rosebud Photo Studio for 19 years. They purchased the business and property in 1969 and continued to work there until Dean died in 1984. Ruth sold the business and property in 1990, and moved to Custer where she began working for the Custer State Park Co. During the height of the tourist season, Ruth could be found manning the gift shop at the Coolidge Inn in Custer State Park. She continued working at the Inn until 2002 at the age of 85. Finally, this Saturday's child retired from working for a living.

- In her semi-retirement years, Ruth enjoyed traveling and made several trips to Europe.

- Although Ruth had no children of her own, she and Dean were part of the lives of every child in the Gregory area for decades, taking school photographs and all the other photographs that mark the major events in people's lives. She was also a loving, attentive aunt to her seven nieces and nephews and regularly attended family

reunions.

- When the husband of one of her sister's died, Ruth left Custer and moved to Mankato, MN to live with her widowed sister. But for Ruth, Gregory was home. She returned to Gregory in 2007 to live at the Silver Threads Residence. She was loved by the staff there, and was known for her intelligence; her meticulous attention to detail in business matters; her stylish attire; her enjoyment of sports and her love of gossip magazines. They took loving care of her until she died at her home at Silver Threads on Monday, March 22, 2010.

- Ruth was preceded in death by her parents Lydia and Frank Jones; her husband Dean Stedman; her sisters Mary Jones and Helen Jones Miller; and her brother Howard Jones.

- She is survived by her sister Frances (Jones) Phelps, Mankato, MN; sister-in-law Greta (Howard) Jones, Palm Harbor, FL, nephews David Phelps, Minneapolis, MN; Daniel Phelps, Coon Rapids, MN; Dr. Patrick Miller, Sioux Falls, SD; and Kirby Jones, Palm Harbor, FL; and nieces Dana Jones, New York, NY; Nancy Benedict, Plymouth, MN; and Mary Miller, Seattle, WA.

- Her funeral was held Thursday, March 25, 2010, at St. John's Lutheran Church, Gregory. She was buried at Custer City Cemetery.