

A celebration of life for S. Duane Walker was held on Oct. 12 at Hubbard's Mountain Cupboard, Laramie Peak with final rest at his beloved "Eighty".

Duane passed Oct. 2 at the VA Medical Center in Cheyenne receiving an honored Veteran's salute. Born to John Bradley Walker and Della Mae (Ryals) Walker in Wheatland on Dec. 10, 1931, Duane was 87 at the time of his passing.

Duane attended school in Wheatland and Torrington for a short time, before he moved with his family to Everett, Wash. He also worked different odd jobs while in Washington. At a very young age, he quit school, sold his bicycle to pay for a bus ticket back to Wheatland and hitched a ride with George Lock to his Grandfather's homestead West of town, on Bearhead. He then went to work for Bromley's Lumber Mill, and local rancher Jack Atkinson at his Cottonwood Ranch.

In 1950, Duane entered the U.S. Navy, and proudly served from 1950-1954. Most of his time was spent on the aircraft carrier USS Bon Homme Richard, serving during the Korean Conflict, and crossing the Pacific Ocean seven times.

Upon leaving the Navy, Duane returned to Wyoming and his job at Atkinson's and later back to the Bromley Sawmill. In 1958 he joined a 4-man crew that was employed by the U.S. Forest Service to construct Black

Mountain Fire Lookout Tower in Northern Albany County. The road to the lookout had to be carved and 69 steps that had to be welded to make the staircase to the top of the rock pile where pieces of an observation tower had to be winched up by hand and assembled together to make what still stands there today.

Upon completion of this project, Duane was hired by the Forest Service, and continued to work for Bromley Sawmill in the winters until it closed in 1966.

In 1962, Duane was involved in the construction of the trail and heli-pad that are both used today to access Laramie Peak. This involved hanging from cables and drilling rocks with jackhammers to set the supports and cutting many trees to make a trail. Over his 22-year career with the Forest Service, Duane developed springs, thinned timber, prescribed burns, fought wild fires and built roads North of Douglas in the Laramie Peak District of Medicine Bow National Forest. He was a mechanic and all around jack-of-all-trades, with very little he couldn't do or find a way to get it done.

He was a founding member of the Laramie Peak Fire Zone in 1965.

Duane also built his own home, as well as several others in the Laramie Peak area.

S. Duane Walker

December 10, 1931 – October 2, 2019



from Art Fawcett, and began a small side business of receiving timber sales from the Forest Service, and filling lumber orders with his crew of wife, children, and other family members.

Duane married Sharon "Tiny" Bromley on Dec. 10, 1960. He is survived by his wife of almost 59 years,

three children, Wade (Dot) Walker, Tim (Leah) Walker, and Ronda Walker. Five grandchildren, Kim Britton, Kristi (Jamie) Rietz, Vern (Karen) Jones, Logan Walker, and Kelby Walker. Five great-grand children, Layne Eike, Jhett Eike, Brittony Rietz, Kayla Jones, and Kasey Jones. Sisters Betty Hanson of Everett, Wash. and Marilyn Kidd Briar of Redondo Beach, Calif. Sisters-in-law Denelda Branscom, LaJoy Anderson, Marietta Posten, Jeannette Hohnholt, Billie Eggleston, Faye Hanks, Jenny Cundall, Carol Bromley and T. Joann Bromley. Brothers-in-law Joe Bromley, Tuff Hanks, and Duane Jacobs, as well as many, many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, paternal grandparents Lee Palmer Walker and Etta Belle (Gallaher) Walker, maternal grandparents William Milton Ryals and Lulah Emma (Shaul) Ryals. Parents-in-law Frank and Marie Bromley and honorary parents Jack and Billie Atkinson. Sisters Etta Foote and Jhnette Jacobs and brother William (Bill) Walker. Nephews Dick Hanson, Roy Buckner and Terry Hanks. Brothers-in-law Robert (Bob) Hanson, Bob Foote, Sonny Bromley and Frank Jr. Bromley.

Duane loved to work, having worked hard all of his life, and never was without a long to-do list. He enjoyed time spent with people in general, never knowing a stranger and always enjoyed a beer and B.S. with them. He was a beloved mentor to his friends and family, and left us all with much of his wisdom. Just a few of the Duanisms we have heard often and remember well:

"Hindsight is 20-20", "It's better to have it and not need it, then to need it and not have it", "Never make a plan, as plans are made to be broken", "Can't never did anything but sit on a fence and die, say I can and figure out a way", "Make sure you take time to learn something new every day, and remember the body is made to move, not sit", "Nip it in the a**, before it nips you".

His wisdom and knowledge of the Laramie Peak area history will be hugely missed.

Memorials may be sent to the Laramie Peak Fire Zone, 1836 Cottonwood Park Rd., Wheatland, WY 82201, the No Veteran