

Biography of Herman & Mary Ann Hoppe

Herman Loyd Hoppe was born July 21, 1933, in Borger, Texas. He attended elementary school in Borger until the 5th grade when his family moved to Rogers, Arkansas. He graduated from Rogers High School in 1952. He was drafted into the Army in the fall of 1952 and was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood in Rolla, Missouri, for two years. He was an instructor in the crane-shovel school there.

Mary Ann was born November 4, 1934, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to Ike and Anna Mae Searles. Since her father worked for an oil company, she had an interesting life growing up as she observed the rambunctious lives of oilmen at several places in Texas and Louisiana. When very young, she made several trips to oil stations along the Louisiana Gulf Coast with her father. When her mother heard her using the lingo of the dice players at the stations, she was forbidden to go back. She attended schools in Kilgore and Midland, Texas, and graduated from Midland High School in 1952.

In 1939, her parents bought a farm in the country outside Rogers, Arkansas, in the Little Flock community. This was to be a place to escape the bustle of work for her dad. The property was surrounded by dirt roads, which provides an irony since major streets and highways and growing industry and housing now surround the land. In 1988, Mary Ann's mother made certain that some of the originality of the area would be preserved when she donated ten very valuable acres to the state to be kept as one of the few examples of Arkansas' native prairie. Searles Prairie can be seen at the corner of Dixieland Road and Highway 62 on the north side of Rogers.

"Hoppe," as Herman is better known, and Mary Ann met at a Rogers Riding Club picnic in 1949. They both enjoyed horseback rides along the rural, unpaved roads. Hoppe lived on Dixieland Road where the present Oakdale Junior High is located. He often rode horseback to visit Mary Ann.

He and Mary Ann attended the University of Oklahoma. Mary Ann graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in speech therapy. "Hoppe" and Mary Ann were married in Norman, Oklahoma, on August 18, 1956. They moved to Borger, Texas, where Hoppe worked for Phillips Petroleum Company. Debra, their first daughter, was born there in November 1957. Phillips transferred Hoppe to Odessa, Texas, and Diane, their second daughter, was born there in 1960. In 1974, Mary Ann completed her master's degree in speech pathology at Texas Tech in Lubbock, Texas.

Hoppe completed his degree in secondary vocational educational at Southwest Texas University in San Marcos, Texas, and began teaching auto mechanics at Odessa High School. Mary Ann was a speech therapist in the schools for 30 years. They retired in 1991 and spent the next 5 years traveling in their motor home to 49 states plus all the provinces in Canada.

In 1998 they sold their home in Odessa and moved to Rogers to help take care of Mary Ann's mother, Anna Mae. They built a new home next door to her. Ike Searles, Mary Ann's father, died in 1987. His 1952 Farmall "Cub" had sat outside since about 1970 and was in a terrible condition. "Hoppe" started restoring it. After getting it in working order, the Hoppes saw an article about the "Tired Iron" show at Rose of Sharon west of Gentry. They attended the show and were "hooked" on antique tractors!

They now have a 1947 John Deere "A," Ike's 1952 Farmall "Cub," a 1952 Farmall Super "C," a David Brown diesel, a 1937 Farmall "F-30," and a 1981 John Deere diesel. Hoppe also collects horse-

drawn farming implements, which include a John Deere rake, a sickle mower, a planter, a plow, a cultivator, etc. His thoughtfulness knows no bounds and proof is that he once purchased and displayed a rusty antique hay rake in the front yard with a sign that said “Happy Mother’s Day” for Mary Ann. She wasn’t too amused, but when Hoppe discovered that it was an authentic John Deere rake and tried to pay her a dollar to sell it back to him, she refused. It’s Mary Ann’s rake.

They joined "Tired Iron" about 1999. Ever since, the Hoppes have been strong supporters of Tired Iron and its projects. After the club bought land, they donated a two-bedroom trailer to be located at the site. Until a clubhouse was built, the trailer served as the headquarters of the club. It continues to serve as storage and as an overnight haven for some club members at shows. Mary Ann was very instrumental in starting a farm/home antiques display. The project has grown to the point of having a 32 x 60 foot, concrete-floored building devoted to the growing display. Hoppe and his sign committee have placed Tired Iron signs at prominent locations leading to the show grounds. The best activity of the Hoppes might be their participation in the tractor games. As one would expect, they excel at the blindfolded driver part. They almost always win with Hoppe as the blindfolded driver and Mary Ann as the “guide” since Hoppe has been obeying Mary Ann’s orders for so many years. We love the Hoppes.



Mary Ann on Ike’s 1952 Cub & Hoppe on his 1947 John Deere A