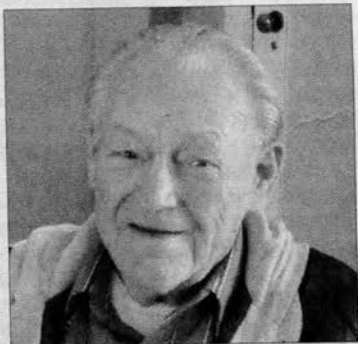


Ralph Doonan, 84**April 2, 1930 - May 3, 2014**

ALEXANDRIA, MN — Ralph Eugene Doonan, the youngest of three children, was born on April 2, 1930, to John and Carrie (Hansen) Doonan at their country home in Clay Township in Shelby County. He attended country school at Clay No. 3 through the eighth grade. He was baptized into the Christian faith through the Irwin Church of Christ and later became a member of the Merrill's Grove Baptist Church in Fiscus.



Ralph met the love of his life, Shirley Maye Heilesen and swept her off her feet with an airplane ride on the day they met.

They eventually married on December 27, 1952 and enjoyed sixty-one years of marriage. Ralph was drafted into the Army on February 16, 1953 and served his country in the Korean War. After returning home from Korea in January of 1955, they began farming on his family's home place. They were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Becky, in 1957. In March of 1958, the little family moved to their own farm in Audubon County, north of Fiscus. After making the decision to get out of farming, Ralph enjoyed laying asphalt roads with Western Engineering of Harlan and then the lively atmosphere of the students at Audubon High School. Ralph retired from maintenance at the school in 1992. In 1995, Ralph and Shirley moved to Minnesota to be closer to their grandchildren. After moving to Minnesota they attended New Life Christian Church. An extraordinary grandfather, he regularly attended all of their extracurricular activities which included dance recitals, soccer games, and even a trip to Big Bear Mountain in California for snowboarding Nationals.

Ralph could always be found out in his shop working on one of his many projects. The door was always open for family, friends and neighbors to stop by for some good conversation and even a cup of coffee as they solved the world's problems. The door swung especially wide for any project his grandchildren came to him with. He and his grandson, Colin usually had a bicycle, go-kart, motorcycle or a car to work on (the main criteria was that you needed to be able to ride in it or on it). His granddaughters, Carrie and Caitlyn's projects leaned more to the crafty and creative. Whatever the project, he loved to spend time with them. Ralph enjoyed restoration projects, which included woodworking and International tractors. He was a member of the Pioneer Power Club for antique tractor preservation and restoration. His pride and joy was his 1945 International Model H that he had restored. The most recent project to be completed in the shop was the restoration of an old Hoosier cupboard which he and Becky did together. Other interests included a close car race, country music and a good old fashioned western. Ralph died unexpectedly on May 5, 2014 with his immediate family by his side. He had attained the age of eighty-four years, one month, and three days.

Ralph was preceded in death by his parents, John and Carrie Doonan, sister Edith Scott, brother Earl, sister-in-law Elaine (Jacobson) Doonan, in-laws Arthur and Mary Heilesen, brother and sister-in-law Clark and Marjori Davey, and brother-in-law Gaylord Heilesen. He is survived by his wife Shirley Doonan of Alexandria, MN; his daughter Becky and her husband Craig Bower of Alexandria, MN; brother-in-law Norman Scott of Botna, brother and sister-in-law, Merlyn and Betty Heilesen of Kirkman; sister-in-law Maxine Heilesen of Irwin; and nephew Ron Doonan and his wife Peg of Jacksonville. His legacy of being a loving and dedicated husband, father, and grandfather will be carried forward by his three grandchildren and four great-grandsons: Colin Bower and his wife Darcy and their son Beckett Ralph of Rogers, MN; Carrie and her husband Bryan Casey and their three sons: Cadence Conrad, Lauchlainn Rhys, and Mickenlee Anthem of Rochester, MN; and Caitlyn Bower of Alexandria, MN.

Ted Sieck officiated the 2:00 p.m. Memorial Service on Monday, May 19, 2014 at Pauley Jones Funeral Home in Harlan. Music was provided by Kelly Doonan and Carrie Casey. Madison Doonan played "Taps" and military honors were done by the Harlan American Legion Helmer Reyelt Post No. 150 and the Shelby County VFW Post No. 941. A private inurnment will be held at a later date.

*Pauley
Jones*

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