



James E. Brunt

JAN 14, 1918 - APR 7, 2008



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James Brunt, age 90 of Chariton, Iowa died April 7, 2008 at the Chariton Nursing and Rehab Center.

James E. Brunt was born January 14, 1918 in Eddyville, Iowa to Leonard and Kathryn Gallagher Brunt. Both of his parents contracted the flu during the epidemic of World War I. A neighbor paid Leonard's life insurance while Leonard was so sick. Leonard didn't survive, so Kathryn took Jim to live with her folks, William and Mary Ann Gallagher. Jim had some good stories to tell about them. When Jim was about 3 years old, he contracted pneumonia and was very ill. His mother, who was a nurse, was credited with saving his life. Remember, still no antibiotics! He had a long recovery and didn't start school until the age of 8.

Kathryn's sister, Agnes Ward, was pregnant and went to Kathryn's house in Eddyville to have her baby because they both loved Dr. Eppie McCrae and also for Kathryn to nurse her. She had toxemia and died, leaving her baby in Kathryn's care. Agnes's husband, Jess, was left with three children and the baby, Elizabeth. After a year, Jess and Kathryn married and she and Jim joined the Ward household. Kathryn was a good mother to the girls and Jess treated Jim like his own son. Everyone worked together to raise ""baby Elizabeth"". We spent many evenings together listening to Red Skelton and Jack Benny on the radio and playing card games.

Jim joined the Ward children attending the Hawkeye Country School and later went to Russell High School. He played basketball and fell in love with his sweetheart, Leona Wright. After graduation in 1936, he entered AIB Business School in Des Moines. Leona went to Beauty College in Ottumwa. They were married in October, 1938. Jim was 20 and Leona was 18. Kathryn (Jim's Mother) had to go with him to get the license because he wasn't old enough at that time, you had to be 21.

After Jim and Leona were married, they bought a meat market in Russell. They both learned to cut meat and they delivered groceries and meat to Grandma Lizzie Ward.



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World War II broke out and Jim received his draft notice. The business had to be sold and new plans made. It was decided that when Jim had to leave, Leona would move to Des Moines and live with Kathryn (Katy) and Jess. Elizabeth was still at home. Jim was in the Pacific Theater as a Quarter Master. Leona bought a small beauty shop and worked while he was gone. Jim was honorably discharged from the Army having qualified as a Rifle Expert and receiving the following decoration and citations: American Theater Ribbon, APT Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal and Victory Ribbon. During their time in Russell, Jim Brunt and Jim Parks had become good friends. After the war was over, the two Jim's teamed up and opened an egg business in Russell. They bought eggs from the local farmers and shipped them all over the United States. They hired many people to work handling and packing the eggs, and drivers to haul them to market.

After several years, they sold this business and together bought a Ford Dealership in Centerville, Iowa. Jim B. always had a love for new cars and always kept them shining clean and polished. Both of the Jim's liked to help young people and during both business's found the opportunity to do so. The business prospered until it was struck a blow when Jim Parks died from a brain aneurism. The heart went out of Jim Brunt and the estate had to be settled for Jennie Parks so the business was sold. Afterward, Jim was elected as a Justice of the Peace and I bet many a young men in Centerville remembers Jim's lecture to him.

For all of her life, Leona had suffered from allergies and would sometimes spend time in Colorado or Arizona where it was easier for her to breathe and she felt so much better. So Jim and Leona built a lovely home located on a golf course in Prescott, AZ. While there, they helped to establish a Presbyterian church in the town. When their friends, Dorothy and Bob Faust moved to Sun City, AZ, it gave Jim and Leona a desire for smaller quarters, so they moved to a condo in Sun City with their dog, ""Pepper"". They loved picking oranges from their back yard tree and sharing them for all to enjoy. Leona had a number of cousins who lived in the area and they had many good times together. She would often mention that Larry and Ellen Turbot had been over and Larry would do things for them. It was while they were there that Jim decided he would like to do a ""Tribute to Jim Parks"" for his family



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and with the help of Charles Wright, he wrote a beautiful book of many memories. Friends and family members cherish this book. A copy may be found at the Russell Historical Society.

Declining health forced Jim and Leona to sell their home and move into an assisted living apartment in Sun City. When Leona's health worsened and it was harder for them to take care of themselves, they moved to the Chariton Nursing and Rehab Center where Leona died of cancer in May, 2004. Those who knew Jim watched him slowly withdraw from this world and finally die on April 7, 2008. I'm sure that he is at peace now because he is once again with his beloved Leona.

Jim is preceded in death by his parents, Leonard and Kathryn, his step-father, Jess, his step-sister, Frances, and his wife of 65 years, Leona. He is survived by his step-sisters Carly Rasmussen and Elizabeth Winch, plus several nieces and nephews. His memory will be cherished by many people.

A memorial service with military rites will be held 3PM, Friday, April 11, 2008 at the Faith United Methodist Church in Russell, Iowa with Pastor Raymond Doser officiating. Burial will follow at the Russell Cemetery. A visitation will be held prior to the service Friday at the Church from 2-3 PM. Memorials have been established to either the City of Russell or Circle of Life Hospice in Chariton, Iowa and may be left at or mailed to the Thomas Lange Funeral Home, 1900 S. 18th St., Centerville, Iowa 52544. Condolences may be left online at www.thomaslangefuneralhome.com.



Tribute Wall

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Thomas Funeral Home posted:

October 21 at 1:19 PM



Thomas Funeral Home shared an album called **Obituary Wall**.



October 13 at 1:15 PM



Media

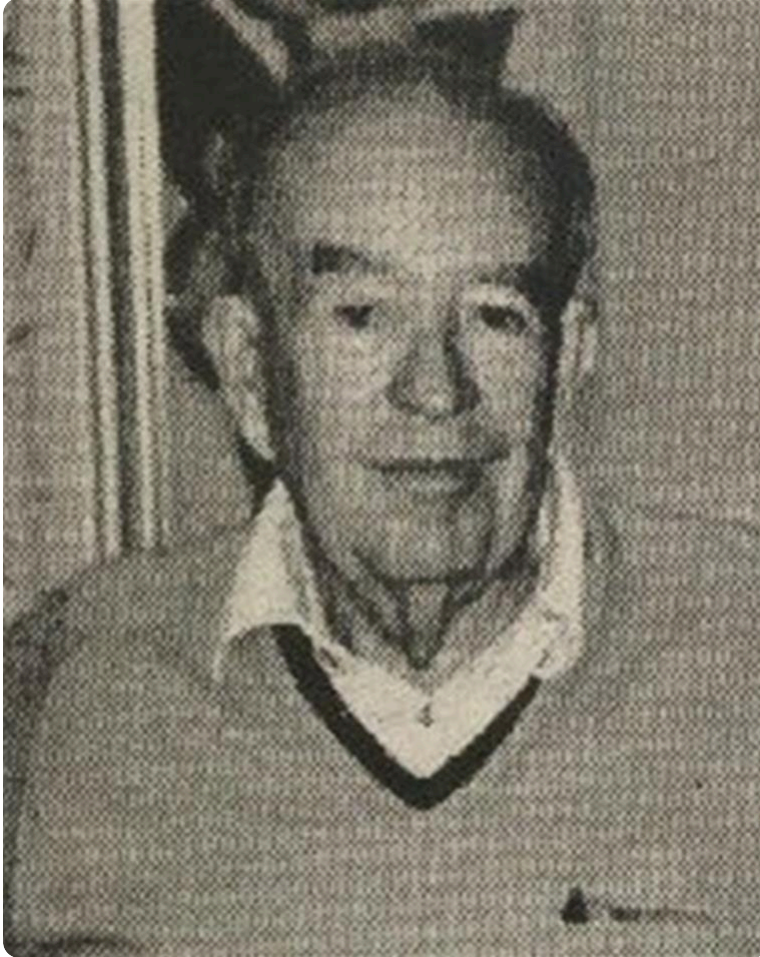
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Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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