



Homer Jesse Long

July 5, 1913 - November 19, 2014

Homer Long, 101, of Oskaloosa passed away late Wednesday evening, November 19, 2014 at the Northern Mahaska Nursing & Rehab Center in Oskaloosa.

Homer Jesse Long, son of Jesse and Rena (Beaman) Long, was born, July 5, 1913, at the home of his parents in Lacey, Iowa. The family later moved to Cedar and during this time his father tragically died during the Spanish Flu Epidemic in 1919. Rena and her young children then moved in with her parents, Albert and Katherine Beaman, and her sister Gertrude Beaman in Oskaloosa. Later the family would have a house of their own in Beacon, but Homer lived with his Beaman grandparents while in high school. Following his education his Grandfather Jake Long helped him get a job in the Lacey area. While working for Carl Andrews, Homer met a lovely young woman, Helen Burggraaf, a school teacher of the Mauchunk School. A five month whirlwind courtship ensued and the couple was married, February 28, 1941, at a Baptist Church in Oskaloosa. They started married life near Albia and later move to the farm they lived on for 40 years, just north of the "Yankee Robinson Corner" in rural New Sharon. Times were hard and to supplement the farm income, Homer did a variety of repair work from electric fencers and CB radios to small engine repair and small appliances. He welded broken machinery for farmers

in the area. He could fix anything! Homer's shop was the hub of the neighborhood where men came for repairs and to catch up on the local news. Homer continued his small engine and electrical repair work even after he and Helen moved to Oskaloosa in 1982. He was 93 when he finally gave up his shop. In 2010, Homer became a resident of the Northern Mahaska Nursing and Rehab Center.

Homer's mother, Rena, was a violin and piano player and from the time Homer was a young child, the love and appreciation of music was instilled in him and his siblings. Homer began violin lessons at age eight. During the 50's, Homer and three neighbors started playing music together. They were Harlan McClure, Wallace O'Farrel and Cloyd (Shorty) Hicklin. Homer also played with other talented musicians. He played for dances until the trend in music and dancing changed in the early 1960's. It wasn't until he retired from farming in 1981 that music again became a source of enjoyment. Homer played with the Country Sundowner Band. The Country Sundowner Band played at the 1991 Iowa State Fair in the senior division receiving third place. The next year, they won first place! Homer was invited to play with the Happy Memories band and was now playing with two bands. Both groups played for many organizations, retirement and nursing homes and local celebrations. If there was a "jam session", Homer and Helen were there.

Homer and Helen met Daryl and Opal Walker from What Cheer and started playing on Walker's front porch with other musicians. They drew such a crowd that they moved their music into the What Cheer Opera House. That group was instrumental in raising money to help renovate the Opera House. The Opry Band played for several seasons.

Along with music, Homer enjoyed traveling, photography, fishing, reading Louis L'Amour and Zane Gray books, building birdhouses for his daughters, and playing computer games. He was a man with many talents and interests. Homer had a rich life, filled with family, friends and the memories of 101 years. Homer became a member of Bethel Baptist church and was baptized at age 98. He was ready to meet his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Those left to cherish Homer's memory are his daughters: Gloria (Roger) Bartlett of New Sharon and Joyce Thompson of Cumberland Furnace, TN; three grandchildren: Karen Van Maanen of Laurel, IA, Christopher (Jennifer) Thompson of Prosper, TX and Blayne Bartlett (Casey Kool) of Lovilia, IA; seven great-grandchildren: Jessica Van Maanen, Zachary Van Maanen, Trisha Van Maanen, Keenen Thompson, Trenton Thompson, Hailey Hill, and Clayton Kool; and three great-great-grandchildren: Jordann Garber, Elsie Grutz and Kambria Van Maanen.

In addition to his parents, Homer was preceded in death by his wife Helen of 73 years on August 25, 2014; his sisters: Gertrude Lucille "Babe" Halliburton and Lois Larue Briney; and a brother in infancy.

Funeral services for Homer will be held at 10 a.m. Monday, November 24, 2014, at Garland-Van Arkel-Langkamp Funeral Chapel with Rev. Steve Cox of the Bethel Baptist Church officiating. Burial will be in Forest Cemetery.

Visitation will begin at 11 a.m., Sunday, at the funeral chapel; the family will be present from 3-5 p.m. to greet visitors. Memorial contributions may be made to Northern Mahaska Nursing and Rehab Center Activity Fund.

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Tribute Wall



“ *Homer Jesse Long*

October 05, 2023 at 11:57 PM