



Ernst W. Floeter

August 8, 1925 - August 29, 2015

ERNST WERNER FLOETER

Grand Ledge

Ernst W. Floeter, age 90, of Grand Ledge, passed away August 29, 2015 after six months with pancreatic cancer. He died peacefully, surrounded by family.

Born August 8, 1925, in Stettin, Germany, to Dr. Ernst and Elisabeth (Glasenap) Floeter, Ernst W. came of age during WWII and was conscripted into the German army. He was, in his words, liberated by the Americans at Normandy, spending 22 months in the U.S. as a POW - the first step toward his adopted home.

After his return, he studied photography, and stole across the border to West Berlin to marry Barbara Walburg Hildebrand in 1953. Together with their first child, they immigrated to the U.S. in 1957, sponsored by All Saints Episcopal in East Lansing. By 1960, two children were added and the family settled in Grand Ledge, where Ernst opened a portrait and wedding studio. Over the next 55 years, he photographed thousands of people, as well as the changes and events of Grand Ledge.

He served in many roles as an active member/office holder of Immanuel Lutheran, Jaycees, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, Ledge Craft Lane,

Liederkrantz, Professional Photographers of Michigan, GL Chairman of the Bicentennial, and as GL's Uncle Sam - most recently as Grand Marshal in June.

Often found playing harmonica, his last tune, six days before he died, was "Ode to Joy." Through his autobiography, "I'll See You Again, Lady Liberty," and his speaking engagements, Ernst was privileged to share his story.

Having lived a life of gratitude for freedom, love of family and friends, world travel, and a good beer, Ernst leaves behind many who are grateful for his presence in their lives.

He is preceded in death by his parents, wife, Barbara in 1997, and sister, Gisela. Ernst is survived by his children, Dorothea (Charlie) Martin, Cornelia (Roger Marshall) Floeter, Dietrich (Annie) Floeter; grandchildren, Neil, George, and Faith; and great-grandson, Jasper.

The family wishes to acknowledge Sparrow Hospice Caregivers, Jim, Angie, and Casey.

A funeral service will be held at St. Michael Church in Grand Ledge, Friday, September 4, at 11:00 a.m. Family will receive visitors one hour before the service, luncheon following. Visitation will be at Holihan-Atkin Funeral Home in Grand Ledge, Thursday, September 3, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Contributions may be made in Ernst's name to Sparrow Hospice or Immanuel Lutheran Church. Cremation has taken place per Ernst's wishes. He will be interred at Immanuel Lutheran Church Memorial Garden at a later date.

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 3. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home & Cremation Services
406 N. Bridge Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
(517) 627-2531
jasonbarclay@holihanatkin.com
<https://www.holihanatkin.com>

Service

SEP 4. 11:00 AM (ET)

Saint Michael Catholic Church
345 Edwards Street
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Tribute Wall



“ *Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Ernst W. Floeter*



Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home - September 03, 2015 at 01:37 PM

 David
Rock

“ *I remember Ernst taking photographs at the parades we marched in through Grand Ledge when I was in high school marching band.*

David Rock - September 17, 2024 at 10:34 PM

ML

“ Hello to anyone who may read this (so late after Ernst's death). I wanted to add mine (and my deceased parents) to the tributes and memories of Mr. Floeter. Upon reading a Letter to the Editor of the New Mexico magazine, my Dad asked me if I could locate the writer, Ernst Floeter of Grand Ledge, Michigan? I did and we called to talk to him about our shared loves of history, Michigan, New Mexico and life. My parents met him for lunch and loved his WWII and Post stories. He was beautifully open and sharing, humane and welcoming. We all enjoyed reading his personal history of WWII, autobiography. I will never see a Hatch (NM) chili or drive by Fort Custer National Training Center for the Michigan National Guard without thinking of Ernst and my Dad! Thanks Ernst for the memories!

Mary Lane
Dearborn, Michigan

Mary M Lane - February 06, 2021 at 07:01 PM

MB

“ Nell, Dorothea, Dietrich and Families. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Your father was an amazing man and I feel so honored to have known him. I will always remember him at his 90th birthday party and the other times I was able to share his greatest times.

Marilyn Bass-Huyser



MARILYN BASS-HUYSER - September 10, 2015 at 07:05 PM

JM

“ *Jean Moore lit a candle in memory of Ernst W. Floeter*



Jean Moore - September 06, 2015 at 10:27 AM

SW

“ *Our deepest condolences to the Floeter family at this time. We feel with you.*

Curtis, Susan and David Weiss

Susan Weiss - September 05, 2015 at 04:07 PM

AM

“ *Dorothea & Charlie: Your father was a gentle giant who lived his life to the fullest!*

A wonderful pleasure to see him participating in all the GL community activities, right up to this past year! I'll always remember him in his Uncle Sam outfit showing his loyal patriotism to those around him. I havent been in GL very long, but will always remember him with a smile! My sincere sympathy!!

Anita Muir - September 04, 2015 at 01:45 PM

RE

“ *i have beautiful pictures of my children, thanks to "Mr Floeter" he was an amazing person and very talented photographer Grand Ledge has lost a true Icon.*

Robin Elliott

robin Elliott - September 03, 2015 at 06:07 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Ernst



Holihan-Atkin-Barclay Funeral Home - September 03, 2015 at 04:00 PM



“ *William and Jean Young purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Ernst W. Floeter.*



William and Jean Young - September 03, 2015 at 01:07 PM

DG

“ ERNST,
I MISS YOU.

I DID NOT KNOW...

*THE MEMORIAL DAY PARADE WOULD BE YOUR LAST RIDE IN
A RED T-bird CONVERTIBLE.*

HAD I KNOWN...

*I WOULD HAVE SHINED IT, DRIVEN STRAIGHTER, SMARTER
AND SLOWER; JUST TO SAVER THE MOMENTS WITH YOU.*

I DID NOT KNOW...

*THE YANKEE DOODLE DAYS PARADE WOULD BE YOUR LAST
"UNCLE SAM".*

HAD I KNOWN...

*I WOULD HAVE SCREAMED, WAVED, PUSHED, APPLAUDED
AND SALUTED. JUST TO GET YOUR ATTENTION.*

I DID NOT KNOW...

*THE ISLAND ART FAIR WOULD BE THE LAST TIME I WOULD
HEAR YOUR BEAUTIFUL MUSIC. THE HARMONICA AND PAN
FLUTE TUBES MADE ME SMILE, LAUGH AND DANCE. THANKS
FOR "DANNY BOY" AND "I DIDN'T WANT HER, YOU CAN HAVE
HER; SHE'S TOO FOR ME".*

HAD I KNOWN...

*I WOULD HAVE LISTENED BETTER, LAUGHED LOUDER AND
APPRECIATED YOUR TALENT.*

I DID NOT KNOW...

*AUGUST 8TH WOULD BE YOUR LAST CELEBRATION. YOU
NEVER LOOKED BETTER. IT WAS A HAPPY DAY.*

HAD I KNOWN...

*I WOULD HAVE EATEN MORE CAKE, SIPPED MORE PUNCH
AND CONGRATULATED YOUR 90TH YEAR. YOU GAVE ALL OF
US THE BEST PRESENT---YOU!*

I DID NOT KNOW...

THAT, ST THOMAS AQUINAS CHURCH AND THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WWII; WOULD BE THE VERY LAST OPPORTUNITY SEE AND BE WITH YOU.

HAD I KNOWN...

I WOULD HAVE TAKEN MORE PICTURES, SHAKEN YOUR HAND HARDIER, AND HUGGED YOU LONGER AND TIGHTER.

I DO KNOW....

YOU ARE WITH THE LORD. I AM BLESSED TO HAVE KNOWN YOU.

ERNST, YOU ARE AN INSPIRATION TO ME. I WILL REMEMBER YOUR SHINING CHARACTER AND UNQUENCHABLE SPIRIT. YOU WILL ALWAYS BE AN AMERICAN HERO AND MY UNCLE SAM.

I BELIEVE THAT SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW; I WILL SEE YOU AGAIN, MY FRIEND.

DAN GRAVER, DEWITT MICHIGAN

DAN GRAVER - September 02, 2015 at 08:39 PM

BF

“ *Bob & Janet Fabiano purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Ernst W. Floeter.*



Bob & Janet Fabiano - September 02, 2015 at 07:37 PM

JM

“ We met Ernie through PPM, and will remember his stories of being a POW and his love of America. It was inspiring. Russ and Janet Miller

Janet Miller - September 02, 2015 at 01:22 PM

RS

“ To my dear friend Ernst,
What an honor and privilege for me to know you. I will miss you, and will always remember you. Thanks for the memories! God's blessings on your family. Rev. Gary Siefert.



Rev. Gary Siefert - September 02, 2015 at 08:43 AM

LM

“ For several years in the late 1970's and early 80's, my family provided the "for-hire" pancake griddles for the Grand Ledge Rotary Club Pancake dinner fund raiser held each year in March. I held the job of "mixer", making gallons of pancake batter for the event. In 1978, I was an awkward 12 year old girl who had developed a stutter in speech. During a lull in the busy activity, Mr. Floeter approached me, took both my hands in his, and said "Take your time, slow down, choose your words." In that moment, with his kind but firm way, he helped me overcome my impending problem. As an adult, I have joined the Grand Ledge community and participated in many activities over the past several years. I have been happy to see that Mr. Floeter has continued to be such a vibrant part of the community events. I will miss him very much.

Lisa Ernst Maidlow - September 02, 2015 at 01:20 AM

RS

“ Ernst would go every Year in November to Fort Custer in memory of the forgotten 26 german PW. His music at the Park at the Liederkranz and any other occasion RIP

Robert Schelter - September 01, 2015 at 09:25 PM

DB

“ Our sincere condolences to the Floeter family for your loss. Indeed, a loss for the whole Grand Ledge Community.

Dot and Lee Barnett - September 01, 2015 at 08:23 PM

BB

“ Ernst was a friend to our family and to this community. We will treasure his memory.

Barbara Borsum

Barbara Borsum - September 01, 2015 at 07:40 PM

BR

“ The air just feels heavy with the loss of Ernst. He has been a part of our consciousness for so long, it's hard to imagine a world without him. He was an icon in the community, his workplace, and in our Christian family. Christmas Eve will never be the same without his voice singing "Silent Night" in German. I will sing it forever in your honor, good and faithful servant.

God's peace to the entire Floeter family. Ernst was loved and will be missed.

Barbara Rinckey - September 01, 2015 at 12:40 PM

DO

“ Sorry to hear about your loss. Saw a lot of him, in the parades, and make sure that you cherish the memories.

Don Kill, Barbershopper

Don - September 01, 2015 at 09:17 AM

BB

“ We are so sorry to hear that your Dad has passed. He was a legend and will always be remembered in stories of Grand Ledge. It's hard to become that person if you weren't born there - but he broke that barrier with ease! That empty space in your heart will never heal, but will be eased with all the shared stories and fond memories kept there. Blessings! Bob and Marlyce

Bib and Marlyce Bursch - September 01, 2015 at 08:26 AM

LM

“ Dorothea and family, I was so sad to hear about your dad. Please know that a lot of people share your grief. -- Lynn (Fry) McDaniels

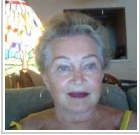
Lynn (Fry) McDaniels - September 01, 2015 at 03:56 AM

BE

“ Karen and I were so blessed to have know Ernst while we lived in Lansing and worshiped at Immanuel Lutheran Church. He was such a kind, welcoming man who opened his arms to us and shared his gentle, creative spirit. Please accept our condolences on the loss of your father and Grandpa, and may God hold all of your hearts in his healing hands during this time of grief.

Bob and Karen Eichelberger

Bob and Karen Eichelberger - August 31, 2015 at 09:26 PM



“ PLEASE ACCEPT OUR HEART FELT SYMPATHY ON THE PASSING OF YOUR LOVED ONE. HE CONQUERED MANY HARDSHIPS IN HIS LIFE AND LEFT A WONDERFUL LEGACY.



THERE IS A BOND DEATH CAN NOT SEVER. LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP LAST FOREVER.

JOANNA (AND SON, FRANC) HARRINGTON

Joanna Harrington - August 31, 2015 at 08:28 PM

DE

“ I was lucky enough to get to know Ernest in the Grand Ledge J.C.s in the mid '70s. For most of my years, Ernest was a part of everything Grand Ledge. His loss will be felt by many. He lead a life worth celebrating. Dale and Jo Ann Edly

Dale Edly - August 31, 2015 at 07:27 PM

KT

“ Forever loving thoughts of your entire family will be a treasure I hold dear in my heart and mind. We shared so many hours within your home growing up and I'll cherish the memories of both your folks and all you "kids". When read of Poppy' s passing I could only see his face filled with abundant joy as your mom was right their greeting him into Gloryland. Your folks were beautiful and will be missed. Love & peace to you - my childhood sisters and brother.

kathy carpenter thompson - August 31, 2015 at 03:31 PM

WE

“ Ernst was the most adventurous person we've ever met and always shared his stories with everyone. He was such a pleasure to meet on the streets of Grand Ledge, for he always had that signature smile and greeting that had the power to illuminate one's day. He was well-loved by everyone for his trademark Uncle Sam through so many parades. We have two precious family portraits Ernst made of our family on the occasions of Michigan's 150th year and the nation's Bicentennial in 1976. He also took a photograph of the old Eschtruth Electric store, precious to Walt, hanging in his office. Especially meaningful, too, Ernst came to our home to do the 90th birthday photo of Frank with his son and daughters. He was so alive and vital! We cannot imagine this city without his presence. He will ever live in our hearts. Wonderful life well-lived! Prayers for you, his family, Walt & Ann Eschtruth

Walt and Ann Eschtruth - August 31, 2015 at 02:35 PM

SA

“ Dorothea and family, you are in my thoughts ~ Sandie Wojcik

Sandie - August 31, 2015 at 02:21 PM

RD

“ I am so saddened to learn of Ernst's passing and my condolences to Dorothea & Charlie and the whole family. I think I can count on one hand the number of people I know who have made such a difference in the local community and beyond. Ernst definitely is one of them. If there is a true definition of a legend, it describes him.

Richard Deer - August 31, 2015 at 10:51 AM

SS

“ I think Ernest was one of those people who was like glue and helped hold the town together. I know that all who knew him were blessed. His warm smile and his stories were like a hug to us all. I am so sad for our loss and can only hope his family takes comfort that many mourn with them and share their grief.

Sandy Hough Sipes - August 31, 2015 at 07:44 AM

SS

“ Sandy Hough Sipes lit a candle in memory of Ernst W. Floeter



Sandy Hough Sipes - August 31, 2015 at 07:33 AM

KB

“ Thinking of all of you during this difficult time. You father was a wonderful man he took my senior pictures and boy did he make us laugh while taking our wedding photos. I will never forget that smile.



Kathy Block-Bechtol - August 31, 2015 at 06:45 AM

LH

“ Ernst was an ever present steady hand in our family memories; documented by the many photos we all have hanging on our walls. He saw us through our tears of joy and captured an instant to immortalize forever. He also hugged us in our grief. What a wonderful human to have called our friend. My heart aches for you loss and my loss too. God's Peace

Linda (Gehlhaar) Hammerberg - August 30, 2015 at 06:01 PM

LH

“ *Linda (Gehlhaar) Hammerberg lit a candle in memory of Ernst W. Floeter*



Linda (Gehlhaar) Hammerberg - August 30, 2015 at 05:51 PM