



Arthur J. Erford

June 18, 1931 - May 15, 2021

Arthur Jewell Erford passed from this life on Saturday, May 15, 2021 at Mercy Defiance Hospital. Art was born June 18, 1931, next to the youngest of 10 children of Henry Michael and Mary Dorothy (Mack) Erford, on a Hamler, Ohio farm where he spent the next 89 years.

As a boy, one of his earliest memories was riding astride a Belgian draft horse while working his father's fields. He loved all sports, but particularly baseball. Throughout his life he was an avid Detroit Tigers fan and rooted for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish.

Art served his country, his community and was devoted to his wife and family. He will be remembered for his optimism, kindness and humor, stories, and incredible memory. He loved dancing and singing, frequently breaking into spontaneous song.

Art graduated in 1949 from Hamler High School, turning down a full scholarship to The Ohio State University in agriculture, saying "I already know how to do this." He was drafted in 1952 and served in the Korean conflict for two years. He took great pride in the fact that his three older brothers served during WWII, with Henry "Mack" earning a Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

Art married Mary Ann Bratton in Leipsic, Ohio, on September 17, 1955.

Together they danced through life, farming and raising five children. For a number of years, they owned and operated the Dairy Creme in Deshler.

Over the years, Art served as: president of the Farmers Union, a Marion Township Trustee, and President of Hamler Co-op. He was a member of the Hamler American Legion, St Paul's Disciples of Christ, the Northwesterners Chorus (Defiance Chapter) for 40 years, a certified member of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, a life-long member of Patrick Henry Athletic Boosters, United States Trotting Association and the Ohio Horsemen Association. He had owned and bred harness race horses since 1962, frequently naming them for children and grandchildren. He and Mary followed their Erford Stables horses, attending races throughout the Midwest. He loved to golf and his family hosted the Annual Art Erford Open on his birthday for the last nine years.

One of the things he missed most in recent months, was meeting with a group of friends every morning at the Hamler Diner for coffee.

Art was preceded in death by his parents; sisters Lenore Gerschutz, Jean Hammer and Rita "Marvelle" Clausen; brothers Henry "Mack," John, and Reynold; and son-in-law Ronald Treece.

He is survived by his wife Mary; sisters Margaret Zachrich, Eileen Reese, and Mary Ann (Jim) Gerbers; daughters Karla Treece, Jill (Mark) Schumacher, Beth (Larry) Vocke, and Ann (J. Douglas) Miller; son, Paul (Stacy) Erford; grandchildren Brant (Rachel) Treece, Shanna (Andy) Barton, Lauren (Matt) Oesterle, Dane Arthur (Brittany) Treece, Jon Schumacher, Andrew Schumacher, James Schumacher, Paul Matthew Erford, Wayne Arthur Erford, Katie (Adam) Erford-Geckle, Elliot Arthur (Emily) Vocke, Derek (Mackenzie) Vocke, Evan (Danielle) Vocke, Isaac Miller, Meredith Miller, and Eldon "Mack" Miller; and great-grandchildren Maddox Treece, Eli Treece, Alexandria Jewell

Barton, Drew Barton, Pierce Barton, JJ Barton, Briar Oesterle, Brooks Oesterle, Neve Oesterle, Tatum Treece, and Presley Treece. Two additional great-grandchildren are on the way.

The family will receive friends at Rodenberger Funeral Home, Napoleon, Ohio on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 from 4-7 PM with a prayer service held at 6:30 PM. The Funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Paul Catholic Chaple, Hamler, on Thursday, May 20, 2021 at 10:30 AM with an hour of visitation prior to services. Interment with military honors will be held at St. Paul Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Hamler Fire and EMS or a charity of your choice. Online messages and condolences maybe shared with the family at rodenbergergray.com.

Cemetery Details

St. Paul Catholic Cemetery

Hamler, OH

Previous Events

Public Viewing

MAY 19. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Rodenberger Funeral Home - Napoleon
1010 Westmoreland Avenue
Napoleon, OH 43545

Prayer Service

MAY 19. 6:30 PM (ET)

Rodenberger Funeral Home - Napoleon
1010 Westmoreland Avenue
Napoleon, OH 43545

Public Viewing

MAY 20. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Paul Catholic Church
Hamler, OH

Mass

MAY **20**. 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Paul Catholic Church
Hamler, OH

Tribute Wall

BZ

“ *Our sympathy to the Erford family.
Don and Bonnie Zierolf*

Bonnie & Don Zierolf - May 19, 2021 at 01:27 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for
the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



May 19, 2021 at 10:31 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the
family of Arthur J. Erford.*



May 19, 2021 at 10:11 AM

JK

“ *Jack K. purchased a sympathy card for the family of
Arthur J. Erford.*



Jack K. - May 19, 2021 at 10:06 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



May 19, 2021 at 12:28 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



May 18, 2021 at 07:56 PM



“ *I sure will miss his smiling face! Art always was so genuine and interested in me and my family. Such a kind and upbeat man! I'll never forget his patience as he and I worked one time together to get Karla's young kids ready to go to church with him. Do you remember that Lauren?? He never skipped a beat! Prayers to you all as you mourn your loss.*

Kristy Smith - May 17, 2021 at 10:49 PM



“ *Jay Guelde and Doug Guelde Family purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



Jay Guelde and Doug Guelde Family - May 17, 2021 at 08:06 PM



“ *A Full Life was purchased for the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



May 17, 2021 at 07:42 PM



“ *Sid and Judy Barton purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



Sid and Judy Barton - May 17, 2021 at 04:16 PM



“ *Mary and kids, I am so very sorry your your loss. Really missed seeing his smiling face at the diner. Prayers for you all and sending hugs too.*



Kathleen Lieb - May 17, 2021 at 02:58 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Arthur J. Erford.*



May 17, 2021 at 01:49 PM

DE

“ Donald E. purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Arthur J. Erford.



Donald E. - May 17, 2021 at 11:30 AM

ME

“ We the family of Cresencio Melchor send our condolences. We will always remember him as a good friend and great all around person. May he RIP 🙏

Mary Melchor Esparza - May 16, 2021 at 09:00 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Arthur J. Erford.



May 16, 2021 at 06:51 PM

SM

“ I'll always remember great times shared with Art, Mary and the rest of the family at the lake. Many great times were spent just catching up on what was going on and enjoying the sunsets. Art was truly one of a kind. They just don't make them like Art anymore and he will be truly missed. Sending our love and prayers to family,

Love Sherill and Steve Myers

sherill Myers - May 16, 2021 at 05:43 PM