

Eulogy

2004 was the year of the long goodbye. This was the year that my dad, Jim Emanuelson, fell to ill health. The final months of his life were difficult....While we will miss him terribly, we understand that his difficult last days are now over....

Funerals should not just be about crying and mourning...but about smiling as we remember the life we are here to celebrate. We affectionately called him "Pa." Jim Emanuelson was born on September 6, 1920 to Arthur and Ethel Emanuelson in Red Rock, Oklahoma. Jim was born in the farm house where his family lived. He had several brothers and one sister. Jim was the youngest in the family. His brothers were Ray, Clark, Clyde, and Tom, and his sister Grace. He first knew my mom, Aliene, by seeing her from the school bus. They went to Red Rock High School together – Jim graduated in 1938. Jim and Aliene were married August 30, 1942. Their honeymoon was a trip to Colorado Springs. They drove up Pikes Peak on that trip. Little did they know that this beautiful Colorado town would one day be a city of half a million people, and their home. Shortly after they were married, Jim was called to military duty. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II. He was whisked away for a 3-year adventure that took him all over the world. During that time, Mom wrote to him nearly every day. He once said how lucky he was to have Mom with dedication to writing him...other soldiers were lonely and many of them rarely received a letter from home. This was his journey...

He left Norfolk, Virginia by ship. The ship was to travel to Capetown, South Africa for R&R. However, German subs were following them too closely in the Atlantic Ocean. So their ship was re-routed to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. After time in Rio, they left and sailed around the southern tip of Africa and up to the Red Sea. They stopped in Yemen, and later went through the Suez Canal. Then they went on to the Mediterranean Sea. Jim spent time in Cairo, Egypt. This is where he saw the Disney movie "Fantasia" in one of those nice movie theatres with red carpet. He stayed in the Sahara Desert where he and his army pals rode camels. He said they had to check their boots for scorpions before they put them on. They took a sailboat across the Nile River. They also went to the big Pyramid on camel. Jim also spent time in Algiers. Later he was in Libya, where he was involved in a military jeep accident. The jeep driver swerved to miss a pedestrian. Jim was a passenger in the jeep. He also spent time in Morocco.

After Africa, Jim traveled to Sicily where he supported pilot training to land gliders (Jim was a glider mechanic). Later, he traveled to Scotland on a luxury liner called "Empress of Bermuda." Jim then was stationed in London, England for 9 months working on gliders. They later crossed the English Channel in a C-47 airplane. Within a day of Jim's airplane trip over the channel, the famous band leader Glenn Miller had also flown over the English Channel, but *his* plane crashed and he was killed. Jim's plane landed safely in France.

Jim was stationed for awhile in northern France. Jim went to Paris and went up the Eiffel Tower. He sent 3 different perfume bottles to my Mom (one of them arrived broken). The European part of the war ended while Jim was stationed in France. Later, they flew over Germany to look at the damage from the war.

Later Jim was in Antwerp, Belgium, and then Brussels. He then traveled by ship to New Jersey. Coming in, Jim saw the Statue of Liberty. He then returned home for 30 days,

and then back to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas where he was discharged. Later, he was called to go to the Japan theater of the war. This was very bad because thousands and thousands of American troops were expected to lose their lives there. He was scheduled to leave in 2 weeks. However, Harry Truman approved the bombing of Japan, and Jim did not have to go to the Pacific after all!

With his World War II service behind him, Jim returned back home to pick up his life with Mom. In 1948, my parents welcomed their first child...my brother, Jerry. In 1951, my sister Jerilyn came along. In 1960, my parents were expecting their third child. My grandpa told Jim "You'd better hope it's a boy, so you'll have someone to help on the farm!" Well, early on September 2nd, 1960, Jim's dad passed away, and I was born that evening. So much for my grandpa's wish for a grandson!

So this is our happy Emanuelson family of five! We came from Oklahoma to Colorado Springs almost every year on vacation. In 1966, we packed up and left the farm. We moved to Colorado Springs. Jim got a job at Sherwin Williams Paint and Decorating Store. He would work for the next several years in the retail home decorating business. Life was good in our house on Robin Drive...

Here are some of my memories of Pa from that time:

- He would play songs "by ear" on the piano or organ using only the black keys
- He always joked with my best friend Lesli, and affectionately called her "Charlie Brown"
- He took us on family picnics every Sunday (usually Garden of the Gods or Cheyenne Canyon) – we had some favorite picnic spots
- He liked to have a sardine sandwich, a beer and some chips on his picnic
- He took us on road trips and we stayed in dinky motels
- He loved the mountains and he loved to travel
- He never made motel reservations, and always wanted to "play it by ear"
- He was happy just trying a different road to explore
- He had a preference for Oldsmobiles and Mercurys
- He loved his cars and always took photos of them
- He once said that if he would have had the space, he would have kept every car he ever owned
- He sometimes smoked pipes or stinky cigars (he did give up smoking years ago)
- He went back to Oklahoma every summer to help Clark harvest the wheat
- He called sunglasses "colored specks"
- He sometimes called my mom "Kid" or "Susie"
- He called me "Bren" and sometimes kidded me by calling me "Brenda Brat"
- He always liked to use black pepper on his food, but it would always make him sneeze
- After eating dessert, he would say "Now I need something to take the sweet taste out of my mouth!"
- He usually watched the first part of Johnny Carson
- He would say "I'm tard...T-A-R-D, tard"
- If his muscles were stiff, he'd say "I'm all stove up" – the kids and grandkids thought that phrase was kind of silly
- He liked to wear cowboy boots

- He listened to country music
- And...most of all....he was a terrific dad

After we three kids grew up and moved out...my parents had the house to themselves. Jim retired and kept up with the long distance farming for awhile. In 1988, his brother Clark died. This was the end of the long distance farming era. A large estate sale was held, and all the farm implements were auctioned off. This must have been a very emotional time for dad...letting go of old tractors, trucks, machines, and furniture that had been a part of his life for years and years growing up. I was particularly fond of a turquoise Chevy pick-up truck that was ours prior to moving to Colorado. There was also a small toy pedal tractor....and of course the very antique player piano....this, too, was sold. So this was the end of an era.

The next few years, my parents took some trips on their own. It was at this time in Jim's life that he became a grandpa. First, with Sara, then Torrey, Jeff and Jenna. He loved his grandkids. When Jerilyn's kids were little and would lose a tooth, grandpa Jim would take Sara out for ice cream; and he would take Torrey out for donuts. Jeff and Jenna have fond memories of Grandpa and Grandma taking them on the rides at Pueblo Park.

Jim's retirement was sweet.... As always, dad loved taking trips. Not only were there his own roadtrips, but he and Mom went on some longer trips with us kids. There was the trip to Canada, the trip to Oregon, and a couple trips to Las Vegas. We even managed to get Pa on a jet airplane for one of those Las Vegas trips! He also really loved to go to Cripple Creek to play the slot machines.

Later, Jim's eyes started failing him with the onset of Macular Degeneration. His vision worsened over the next few years, but he remained otherwise fairly healthy.

On January 1, 2000, as we welcomed the new millennium, Jim lost the sister he loved so dearly. It was very hard for him to say goodbye to Grace. Jim and Grace were very close. They talked on the phone often, and always enjoyed kidding each other. Jim's brothers had preceded Grace in death. So Jim, the baby of his family, was the one remaining child.

I believe that my Pa lived a very full and happy life. He had a devoted wife, good kids and grandkids, and was relatively healthy for most of his life. He lived a long life, and it was filled with many travels and experiences. We all love him and will miss him dearly.

Goodbye, Pa.