



Donald Dale McCown

October 7, 1930 - February 16, 2015

Donald Dale McCown, known to his friends as “Mac”, died peacefully after a long illness at the Hanson Hospice House on Monday, February 16, 2015 at 6:15 A.M. Born on October 7, 1930 in Nebraska City, Nebraska, he was 84 years old. He was able to live at home up until the last few days, which was his desire, with the help of his friends and Hospice. Mac, a long-time resident of Coloma, Michigan was a retired Chief Petty Officer in the United States Navy, where he served with distinction in both the Korean and Viet Nam Wars. As a River Patrol Boat Captain in Vietnam, he was awarded The National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star, The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal – Seventh Fleet Unit Commendation, The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device, and the Vietnam Service Medal with three (3) Bronze Stars for acts of heroism, meritorious achievement or service in a combat zone, which clearly established that the act involved was very specifically life threatening. In addition, he served over 24 years in the United States Navy on such carriers as The USS Forrestal, The USS Essex, The USS Bennington and The USS Franklin D. Roosevelt and received numerous other awards and medals and was eventually promoted to Chief Petty Officer, the highest enlisted ranking. He supervised the flight decks of these ships, working with the catapults and the arresting gear, a very dangerous position. He served our country, which he loved, with pride and distinction.

In 1956, he left the US Navy for four years to join the United States Army as a Paratrooper and to train for the Rangers. He served in Germany, eventually going back to the Navy. Having purchased land in Berrien County, Michigan while a Navy recruiter in Chicago, he retired in 1968 to his beloved property and land in Coloma. He worked as a Supervisor on the road crews for Berrien County and eventually retired from there as well.

Those who were acquainted with Mac, would tell you he was one of the most colorful and unforgettable characters they ever met, who had a million stories, complete with sound effects, for every situation. Beloved by all who knew him, he will be sorely missed.

He is survived by his older brother Robert L. McCown of Mesa, Arizona and several nieces and nephews, along with his longtime friends’, David and Paula Faultersack and their children, who he considered family, along with his many other friends and those patrons of the Side Track Café in Watervliet, where he went every single day.

His family appreciates all the people who have helped him during his long illness. He often spoke of how very much it meant to him and how amazed he was that so many people cared. He felt that he was truly blessed. Arrangements are being made at the Florin Funeral Home, Davidson Chapel in Coloma, Michigan, but at the deceased's request, there will be no funeral and no flowers. Those of you who knew Mac will understand. Donations can be made to "Hospice at Home", 4025 Health Park Lane, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085, if desired. Please remember him in your prayers.

Tribute Wall

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“ With love in my heart and a tear in my eye, I write this. "The Macster" (my name for Mac) would come into Ma-N-Pa's around 3:00 daily, so that's when I took my break from work. Not only me, but my family would join his table too. He would tell story after colorful story about life, the war, and people. He would have us in tears laughing or in deep thought. Over the decades that I've known Mac, he always spoke is mind and was highly respected by others. Thanks for giving me something to look forward to Mac. Life was definitely better with you in it! Bye for now.

Joann Ripley (Gilliam) - February 23, 2015 at 10:14 PM

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“ "Every day's a good day kid," my spunky friend would say as he was leaving the restaurant. For years he would come into Ma-n-pas and share stories, laughter, and witty remarks. I talked to him about going back to college and he said, "we'll you know kid, sometimes even a turtle has to stick his neck out." So, I did. It was exactly the encouragement I needed. He even came to my wedding! After many threats (from me) he showed up for the ceremony and then dissappeared. It's been five and a half years; I saw a few times after. I will cherish our many afternoon chats and his mischievous smile. Love ya Macker! See ya on the otherside!

Mary Andres - February 21, 2015 at 02:39 PM