



Lonnie "L.D." David Cook

November 19, 1920 - July 31, 2019

Lonnie David (L.D.) Cook, born November 19, 1920 in Morris, Oklahoma, passed peacefully on Wednesday, July 31, 2019 in Salinas, California.

Lonnie was the eldest of three siblings (Anna Marie and Lynn James) and called Morris home during various seasons of his life. He grew up here and graduated from Kinta High School in 1939. He received a football scholarship to college. However, when he arrived he found they had given his preferred position away so he did not stay. He then tried a trade school in Oklahoma City, but found the noisy city life kept him awake at night; so he came back to Morris.

Finding no work, he decided to join the Navy in 1940, a decision that would mark the rest of his life. The very next year he was aboard the USS Arizona when she was hit at Pearl Harbor. His life was spared that day and he helped many men escape the Arizona on life rafts, though he could not recognize them in their severely burned condition. Though this is the story he is asked most about, he also saw the flag raised at Iwo Jima, escorted President Roosevelt to the Yalta Conference, sailed through the Panama canal twice, toured many Asian islands, and crossed the equator (which was a special rite of passage aboard a Navy ship). He had been in over a dozen battles and eventually received 14 battle stars and numerous medals.

After six years, he was honorably discharged and returned to Morris, Oklahoma. A few years later, at Morris Cafe, he noticed a pretty girl. He had a friend with him and declared, "That's the one I'm going to marry." Lonnie and Marietta (also a Morris native) dated locally. But when Marietta moved to California to help a relative, Lonnie could only stand their long-distance relationship so long before he followed her. They married June 23, 1950 in Salinas, California.

While in Salinas, Lonnie attended a local college to learn how to weld. They stayed in Salinas only two years before buying a trailer and heading for the east coast. Together they traveled all over the east coast as Lonnie was known to say, "They are paying a

nickel more in a different town; let's go!" These years of trailer living suited their hospitable nature, making friends in every state they visited. They also had their daughter (Pat Cunanan) December, 1956 while living in New Jersey.

Their travels eventually led them back to Salinas, California in 1963. He joined the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 62 and worked for them until his retirement in 1982. Lonnie did not wait for retirement to enjoy his favorite hobbies, however. He could be found fishing and hunting many weekends all over the country. Even on weekends when his wife was still working, he and Patty would go camping and fishing. During the 1980s he was able to trap shoot avidly. Hunting for so many years paid off as he kept a high shooting average. He won dozens of belt buckles and trophies during these years. But, his family remembers the prize bolos he would proudly wear.

The year of his retirement, his first granddaughter (Jenifer Harding) was born. With his newly freed schedule, and the rest of the family working, he became the babysitter. He did not seem to mind changing diapers, singing songs, and playing pretend. As Jenifer grew, he taught her to shoot and introduced her to bowling (another of his weekly hobbies). Lonnie and his wife could be found several times a week having a good time at the bowling alley.

After 30 years in Salinas, Lonnie and Marietta returned to Morris to be close to their siblings and other relatives as they aged. They always enjoyed the country life and were excited to get back to it. However, the same year they moved, their second granddaughter (Katie Cunanan) was born. So Lonnie and Marietta made yearly visits to California. Their immediate family in California also made yearly summer trips to visit them. Katie grew up loving time at ponds and driving on the backroads with her "Papa."

During these later years, Lonnie began to open up about his time in the Navy, sharing details and stories many had not heard before. He never considered himself a "hero" and certainly never sought the spotlight; he was truly a humble man. But, when asked, he had no problem sharing his story and making sure that history was correctly told.

As Lonnie and Marietta aged and needed more care, they returned to California in July, 2018 to live in an assisted living home close to family. Shortly thereafter, his bride of 68 years fell and eventually passed away on December 11, 2018. L.D. then moved in with his daughter and son-in-law (Clark Cunanan) in Salinas, California. While there he enjoyed his daughter bringing coffee to his bedside each morning and fixing the kinds of food he liked each day. He was at home with family and enjoyed regular visits from his two granddaughters, grandson-in-law (Nick Harding) and great-grandson (David Harding).

Most days were spent playing cards or dominoes and listening to L.D. guess the puzzles on Wheel of Fortune before anyone else.

As his body weakened, he was blessed to stay in his daughters home and be cared for by family. He was surrounded by loved ones as he peacefully joined Jesus and Marietta again

Cemetery

Events

Morris Cemetery

Morris, OK,

AUG **Viewing** 01:00PM - 08:00PM

9

McClendon-Winters Funeral Home - Morris
421 South Hughes, Morris, OK, US, 74445

AUG **Funeral Service** 01:30PM

10

First Assembly of God Morris
N. Hughes St., Morris, OK, US, 74445

Comments



“ Fair winds and following seas sailor.
"Boatswain... Standby to pipe the side... Shipmate's going Ashore..."

Thank you for your service to this nation.



Harry Simpson - December 07, 2019 at 01:55 PM



“ A True American Hero! He was a wonderful man and I am glad I knew him and got to hear some of his stories. Praying for the family and many many friends he had, strength comfort and peace. RIP LD Thanks for serving our country!



Rebecca Arnold - August 02, 2019 at 02:35 PM



“ Rest In The Peace that you so deserve!!! and THANK YOU ! YOU GAVE YOUR ALL!!

Linda Chambers - August 04, 2019 at 01:57 PM



“ Not only was he a member of America's greatest generation. He was one that caused it to BE the greatest generation. Thank you for your service, sir. Fair winds and following seas.

CDR Kimberley Nikodym - August 06, 2019 at 09:51 AM



“ We always enjoyed L. D.'s stories and his sense of humor when he would bring Marietta to China painting class. We miss both of them.

Helen McNabb

Helen McNabb - August 09, 2019 at 02:32 PM