



Lawrence Dale Hussong

November 4, 1923 - November 22, 2020

Lawrence Dale Hussong, 97, passed peacefully on Sunday, November 22, 2020, after a brief illness. Dale was born on November 4, 1923, in Granite City, IL, to Harold & Edna (Moore) Hussong. He was preceded in death by Lillie Mae (Tillie) Wheeler, the love of his life and precious wife of nearly 68 years, on June 2, 2014. He leaves behind four daughters: Linda (Don) Post of St. Charles, MO; Sue (Ross) Maxwell of Estes Park, CO; Terrie (Patrick) Maxwell of Lusby, MD; and Jan Carton of Wright City, MO; as well as 12 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

After graduating from Mt. Vernon Township High School in 1942, and as the top draftsman in his class, he went to work for Portland Cement. He was more than ready to serve his country in World War II but had to bypass the deferment his employer secretly requested for him, driving to St. Louis, MO, to enlist as a private in the United States Army at the age of 19. Upon completion of boot camp at Camp Claiborne, LA, he shipped out of Newport News, VA, on February 22, 1944, bound for Casablanca assigned to the 688th Engineer Base Equipment Company. Their main duties were building airstrips and delivering war materials in North Africa, Italy, & France. He shared many war stories over the years, one resulting in an unexpected promotion. His staff sergeant stole a bicycle, fell off, and broke his leg. He was sent home and Dad was promoted to his position! He completed his service with the rank of Tech Sergeant and departed for the United States on the SS Ernie Pyle,

arriving in NYC on March 7, 1946. Shortly after he returned to Mt. Vernon, IL, a friend set him up with a blind date to see the Ted Weems Band at the Mt. Vernon Armory. Even years later, every time he retold the story, he said 'when she opened the door. . .' and, with a deep sigh, his hands would cover his heart and you knew, it was love at first sight. He and Tillie were married on June 23, 1946. They never lost their love of dancing to Glenn Miller tunes.

Under the GI Bill, he attended Bradley University in Peoria, IL, and Washington University in St. Louis, MO, while working for Prudential Life Insurance and starting a family. He remembered having to call on policyholders to collect the 10 cent life insurance premiums, something he did not enjoy. Then his love of drafting paid off and he got his dream job as a tool designer in Dept 121 for McDonnell Aircraft, and worked there until he retired in 1980. He designed the tools for the production of the wings on many of their planes (F-4 Phantom, F-101 Voodoo, F-15 Eagle, F/A-18 Hornet, AV-8B Harrier, and the DC-10) and traveled around the United States, as well as England and Germany, overseeing work that McDonnell outsourced.

Dale enjoyed fishing and hunting with his MAC buddies, one time killing two turkeys with one shot. He also loved building and woodworking. While he was still employed, he and Tillie (along with good friends R. T. and Nancy Senter) built a home in Florissant, and later, after retiring, Dale and Tillie built a second home in Woodlawn, IL. When he wasn't building houses or making furniture, he was making toy trucks and planes for his grandsons, doll cradles for his granddaughters, and beautiful bowls for his daughters. Of course, any time one of the daughters needed something built (bookshelves, cabinets, a fireplace mantle. . .the list was endless), he would show up a couple of days later with plans for approval, and shortly thereafter, the finished product. He loved it and so did we! In his last years without Tillie to play chicken scratch dominoes, there was nothing he enjoyed more than playing bingo, 3 cards at a time! His bingo winnings were always in the conversation with his

daughters, but everyone knew it didn't matter if he won or not. He loved playing that much!

In 2018, one day before his 95th birthday, he and daughter Sue, his Guardian, went on a Greater St. Louis Honor Flight to Washington D.C. There are no words to describe the joy of that day for him: a water cannon welcome on arrival, seeing every war memorial and a wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, endless lines of cheering and waving people, handshakes, thank yous, salutes, flags, escorts everywhere--no stoplights or traffic jams for these brave men! On the flight back home, Mail Call was an unexpected treat: dozens of letters from family and friends were presented to each veteran. Dad was especially touched by the drawings and letters from his great-grandchildren. Even after a full day of being the center of attention, he was blown away by the Welcome Home reception at Lambert Airport. After deplaning, we began the long walk back to the terminal and through the Hall of Flags, where every hall and stairway was lined with military personnel, Boy Scouts, & Girl Scouts standing at attention before the handshakes and clapping began again, finally ending in the terminal where all the friends and family members were waiting, erupting into cheers for each vet as they came through the door. They were treated like the heroes they are and he spoke many times of that amazing day.

Dad had many favorite sayings, some of which were 'absotively posilutely!'; sheauty bop (being married to a beautician plus having four daughters, we heard it often); calling himself 'a grumpy old goat' (which he was not); 'See you next summer at 2 o'clock'; two hairs past a freckle; and one he spoke shortly before the end. When asked 'How are you feeling?', he replied, as usual, 'Fine as frog's hair!' And, our favorite, 'I love you beyond forever'. We will miss hearing him say that.

Looking back over his very long life, God has truly blessed this man.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association or the Greater St. Louis Honor Flight.

Services are private.

Cemetery Details

Valhalla Indoor Mausoleum

7600 St Charles Rock Road
St Louis, MO 63133

Tribute Wall



“ *Your Vizient Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Lawrence Dale Hussong.*



Your Vizient Family - November 30, 2020 at 03:25 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Lawrence Dale Hussong.*



November 30, 2020 at 03:02 PM