



Don C. Hart

December 18, 1931 - November 30, 2016

Hart, Don C. Age 84. Passed away surrounded by his family on November 30, 2016 in Royal Oak. Don was born on December 18, 1931 to the late Bill and Terttu Hart in Detroit. Don took great pride in his Finnish American heritage. He was a 1949 Highland Park High School graduate, attending Wayne State University prior to his enlistment and service in the Korean War. Don worked for many years as an advertising executive in Detroit. After retiring in the Gaylord area, Don was active in his local VFW, serving as Adjutant to VFW Post 1518. His last mission was to help raise funds for a new building for the post.

Beloved husband of Caroline. Loving father of Kirsti (Gary) Hart-Negrich, Douglas Hart, and David (Darcy) Hart. Proud grandfather of Kara (David Tibergien) Hart-Negrich and Blake Hart-Negrich, Erik (Lindsey) Hart, Jenna Hart, Blake Hart, and Zara Hart. Loving brother of Benita Hart and brother-in-law of Rhoda and Jim Stebick.

Inurnment at Great Lakes National Cemetery in 2017. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions to VFW Post 1518 PO Box 1826, Gaylord, MI 49734 are appreciated. Share your memories on the tribute wall at www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com.

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

4200 Belford Road
Holly Township, MI 48442

Tribute Wall

DC

“ I'm so sorry to heard of Don's passing. He was a gentleman and a friend whom I've known for a number of years. He always had a smile on his face.

Dennis Castile - December 15, 2016 at 07:04 AM

CG

“ Don Hart was a great friend. I knew him in high school, at Highland Park High School in the Class of 1949. We re-connected years later through working on many reunion activities and events. He and Caroline made a point of getting to Naples, Florida these last several years, in March. Don helped to make the Annual Lunch very memorable with his amusing talks and memories. My Sincere Condolences to the Hart family.....my Love to Caroline.

Cynthia Lisle Galster, H.P. Class of 1949

Cynthia Galster - December 12, 2016 at 04:56 PM

DS

“ *Caroline and Family*

I remember all the years of bowling with the Michaywe group on Thursday afternoon and what a gentleman Don always was. Don always had a smile on his face. Thank you for your years of serving our country RIP. My sympathy to you Caroline. Dee Stasevich

Dee Stasevich - December 12, 2016 at 09:01 AM



Teresa
Koronka

“ *Caroline and family,
Paul and I would like to express our deep sorrow in losing such a
genial friend. You couldn't help but like Don the moment you met
him. Know that you are in our thoughts and prayers.*

*Teresa and Paul Koronka
VFW Post 1518, Gaylord, MI*

Teresa Koronka - December 12, 2016 at 08:43 AM

“ Memories of My Brother

I do believe not many sisters have a brother who phones her every Sunday. – except when he's travelling, of course. I've been receiving that Sunday morning call from my brother for twenty, thirty years, maybe more.

I didn't receive a call last Sunday because Don died three days before.

My brother gave me my name. Well, my nick name. He was barely two years old and just starting to talk when I was born. He couldn't pronounce Benita. He called me Benny Beta. And it stuck. I was called 'Beta' by family and friends until I was well into my teens.

Some of my older relatives still call me Beta. And it warms my heart when I hear it.

But my brother switched to Benita many decades ago. Presumably, when he figured the old nick name just wasn't dignified enough for a mature woman.

Don lived in the United States, where I, too, was born. But I'm a Canadian now, and very happily so. In recent years, we got together only a couple of times a year when he and my lovely sister-in-law, Caroline, made the trip north to Sudbury. And I used to travel south once a year to spend a week or two with them. But I haven't been able to make that trip for some time now.

I like to call ours an 'Ameri-Canadian' family. Because we have dear relatives on both sides of the border. Don and I spent many summers with our maternal grandparents and our Uncle Allan who was more like a big brother - because he wasn't much older than we were. They lived in a log house, the old homestead south of Sudbury, out the Long Lake Road.

When I was very young, there was a time we crossed the border

through the tunnel under the Detroit River between Windsor and Detroit two or three times a week. It was much easier then, than it is today. No passports. No guns on the hip of the immigration officers. Just a friendly hello and goodbye, have a good trip.

I've heard it said that ageing is a story of loss. I believe there's a lot of truth in that. We lose energy and strength, we lose friends, and we lose words - sometimes in the middle of sentences

But my brother never lost his sense of humour. It was a gentle humour. He had a quick wit and made people laugh. He liked people.

He was a soldier. He fought in Korea. Tall and slim, handsome too, he was proud to wear his veterans uniform on special American holidays like the Fourth of July.

Americans really respect their veterans. When he wore his uniform, strangers would walk up to him on the street to shake his hand, and say 'thank you for your service'. My brother never told me any stories about Korea - but he cried on 9-11.

Don died peacefully, surrounded by people who loved him. And, judging by the overwhelming number of phone calls and email messages I've received, there were many many people who loved him.

I certainly did. Now when I think of him, I can hear his voice in my head. No words. Just his voice - the tone, the tempo, the warmth. I hope I can hold on to that oh-so familiar voice in my head. I hope I don't lose that.

Life is good when you have warm and wonderful memories of a beloved brother.

I'm Benita Hart

David Hart - December 09, 2016 at 11:32 AM

DH

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



David Hart - December 08, 2016 at 06:05 PM

EP

“ Don was a charming, intelligent and loving man. My fave Cousin, who would always put you at ease the moment you met him, with his gentle humour and wit. He had a subtle charisma that would instantly make you comfortable. I told him years ago that he reminded me of Chuck Norris....we laughed at that. Chuck should be so lucky. Rest in peace good man...love you...Eric Paivio

Eric Paivio - December 07, 2016 at 07:33 PM

DH

“ 3 files added to the album New Album Name



David Hart - December 07, 2016 at 09:09 AM

JS

Don, a wonderful and very friendly second cousin. Visited this family several times and took this foto in his car on a visit during my Fulbright year in Indiana University 1969. My mother was Bill Hart's cousin - my grandma the sister of Bill Harts father Uno (Don's grandpa). Jouko Saari, Finland

Jouko Saari - July 16, 2025 at 09:55 AM

PC

*“ We are saddened to learn of the passing of our good friend Don. We can never forget when we first met Don and Caroline at their Royal Oak home around 1968 and ended up buying it. This qualified us to become members of the "Elegant Eight". Now we have become the "Elegant Seven"
Our sincere condolences to Caroline, Kirsti, Doug, David and their families.
Rest in Peace our good friend,
With love, Paul and Ella*

Paul & Ella Comissiong - December 06, 2016 at 09:11 PM



“ 3 files added to the album New Album Name



Kirsti Hart-negrich - December 06, 2016 at 03:50 PM



“ In lieu of flowers, please send donations to VFW Post 1518, Gaylord, Michigan

Kirsti Hart-negrich - December 06, 2016 at 12:34 PM