



Joseph O. Hessell

October 8, 1921 - October 7, 2019

Hessell, Joseph O., age 97, October 7, 2019.

Joseph was born on October 8, 1921 in Center Line to William and Eva (nee Peltier). He served in the US Navy during WWII in the Pacific Theatre. After retiring from General Motors where he worked as a supervisor for over 30 years, he went on to begin a long career as a crossing guard in Royal Oak. Affectionately known as "Papa Joe", he guided many children, and even the next generation of school children safely crossing the street until retiring at age 92. He was a long time member of St. Mary Magdalen Parish in Hazel Park. His interests included a love of baseball, Clive Cussler novels, his family and helping others. He never met a stranger and will be greatly missed. He married Katherine (nee Culpepper) on May 8, 1946. She preceded him in death on January 1, 2009. Loving father of Karol (Jimmy Dale) Boozer, Joseph (Cathy) Hessell, Tracy (Joe) Bedford and the late Barbara Hopps. Proud grandfather of Christian (Phoebe) Hopps, Steven Hopps, Adam (Joann) Boozer, Rebekah Barron, Jessica Hessell, Joseph Hessell Bedford, Sophie Bedford, Savannah Bedford, the late Jeremy Hessell, great grandfather of Hayden Barron, Halle Kathryn Barron, Nolan Boozer, Benjamin Hopps and great great granddaughters Everleigh Barron and Charlotte Barron.

The family will receive friends Friday from 11 am until time of funeral 1 pm at Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 W. 11 Mile Rd. (4 blocks E. of Woodward), Royal Oak. Interment with military honors rendered by the US

Navy will follow at White Chapel Cemetery, Troy.

Memorial contributions to Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, 26 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10004 are appreciated.

Share your memories at www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com.

Cemetery Details

White Chapel Memorial Cemetery

621 W. Long Lake Road
Troy, MI 48098

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 11. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Funeral Service

OCT 11. 1:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
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Tribute Wall



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph O. Hessel.* ”



October 09, 2019 at 12:53 PM

JB

“ One evening back in high school I picked up Tracy to hang out at a party at my house. I knew enough to not honk and go to the door to pick up my date. So that went well enough and Tracy & I got in the car. Now, if you remember the house on Barrett it had a rocky/dirt road to the east and in my haste to start the night I spun the wheels of my '72 Duster, kicking up a cloud of dust. To this day – I swear it was an accident with no intention on my part. Well you can imagine that's not how Papa Joe saw it. No sooner had I arrived back at my house there was a knock at the door and one of my buddies came and got me and with horror in his eyes told me “Tracy's Dad's at the front door” and he's not happy. I knew what was coming. Papa Joe proceed to chew me out as well as any my drill sergeants – and I know he loved every minute of it. I can imagine how that story grew as he went back home to Granny Katherine and told how he told that little punk he better not do that again and how he had friends on the police force. I hope now that he knows that it was an accident. A few years later I would go to ask him and Granny Katherine for their blessing to marry their daughter and he said I would be proud have me as a son-in-law. I could not have asked for a better father-in-law.

What an amazing life he lead, in 1921 when he was born Model-T's were the most common new car sold, six years later Lindberg would cross the Atlantic, and four decades later he would see a man walk on the Moon. He came of age during the Great Depression, I am sure he listened to the fire side chats of FDR. On December 8th, 1941 he and his friends went to Federal Building in Detroit where he enlisted in the US Navy, spending the next four years in the Pacific as a navigator and signalman on a SubChaser, a boat that was 14 feet wide, 110 feet long made of wood. He had many Navy stories the always enjoyed his story on navigating from Pearl Harbor to Johnson Atoll where he navigated the ship within 3 miles of the target, a distance of 825 nautical miles, all done with a sextant. He saw numerous engagements in such battles as Peleliu (where a member of his high school was lost in action) and in the spring of 1945 at the Battle of Okinawa he was part of the most powerful naval armada ever assembled, 44 aircraft carriers, 20 battleships,

43 cruisers, 191 destroyers, numerous troop transports and support ships including 52 SubChasers. He would return home in late 1945 and a few months later in May of 1946 married his wife of 60 plus years Granny Katherine. He spent the next 30 years working for GM, after retiring in 1976, he went on to work 32 years a school crossing guard with Royal Oak Schools. He was 92 years old when he crossed his last child.

Papa Joe loved sports and was a great baseball player. He saw the Detroit legends of his era play, Mickey Cochran, Charlie Gerheringer, Hank Greenberg, Virgil Trucks, Hal Newhouser, who he even batted against in an exhibition game – (he said all he saw was feet). He loved hockey and was an avid Redwings Fan, saw the Production Line play - Gordie Howe, Sid Able & Ted Lindsey along with Terry Sawchuck. He even saw the Lions win their last championship lead by Bobby Lane.

Papa Joe was very proud of his children, Bobby, Karol, Joey and Tracy.

I learned a lot from Papa Joe but mostly what duty is, duty to work & purpose, duty to country and duty to family.

Joe Bedford - October 09, 2019 at 09:42 AM

JA

Great tribute Joe!

Jeff Altermatt - October 09, 2019 at 10:32 PM

BH

My name is Bill Hessell, a nephew to Uncle Joe, I worked at GM with Joe and was a good friend to Uncle Joe. When I got out of the service in 1956 I went to MSU and in the summers did part time jobs painting and washing walls in homes. I needed help and asked uncle Joe to work with me. He was a great worker, he washed down two Rooms to my one. He was well liked at Gen Motors, Chevrolet in Hamtramck and worked in the Inspection Dept. I send my love and condolences to all in Joe's family. God bless you all and God love and care for Joe in his new home with the Lord.

Bill Hessell - October 11, 2019 at 01:35 AM