



## Joseph E Dunham

November 22, 1928 - October 23, 2019

Joseph Erle Dunham (Joe) peacefully shed his earthly body October 23, 2019 to join Jesus in Heaven. By his bedside at the hospital in Rumford, Clarice, his loving wife of 68 years, bid him farewell, knowing they will be together again when it is God's will. He was born in Pittsfield, MA. on November 22, 1928, & moved to the Wilton area around 1930. After several moves, the family settled in Madrid, then Joe spent his teenage years in New Vineyard. Joe was the youngest of 6 children born to Erle Dunham & Lena Betrece Lord Dunham. He went to Farmington High School, but after a couple of years decided it was more important to earn a living. He found a job in Dixfield at Stowell McGregor & he met a girl named Clarice in 1949. Their first date was a motorcycle ride on a Harley where Joe claimed she twisted his arm to make him marry her! (That's HIS story.) He went into the Army in 1950. They were married June 3, 1951, just before Clarice graduated from high school. He was a PFC in the Army from 1950-1953. Stationed in Iceland, he loved talking about it. He always said there was a girl behind every tree, then would pause & say, "There were no trees in Iceland!" Their only son, "Ernie" was born in 1954. Joe helped to build the Nazarene Church on Weld St, which they have attended ever since. Clarice taught Sunday School there for decades, & held offices, as well as playing the organ there for 50+ yrs. Joe put his church building experiences to good use when they started building their house on Bradley St in Dixfield in 1957. They moved their little family into that house just before Christmas, 1960, & have lived there happily ever since. Joe loved snowmobiling with Ernie & having fun. His tremendous sense of humor, & love of tall tales, made him a friend to all. After the Army, he worked at Stowell McGregor for 20 years, firing up the boiler, among other things. He spent the next 20 years over the road truck driving for Pioneer Plastics, taking him all over the country, which honed his people skills even more. He loved talking on the radio & driving that big Freightliner, but most of all, coming home to his beloved bride, Clarice to whom he was true blue. Joe never got tired of driving, or of telling stories. They started camping in 1975, with a pull behind, eventually working up to 5th wheels.

Members of NAFCA, they were very close to their camping friends, often pulling pranks on their sister, Leanne, & brother in law, Cliff, who they camped with the most. They went to Newfoundland to visit them while they were stationed there. Joe & Cliff were as close as blood brothers, & both of them said so. Joe & Clarice drove to Alaska in a truck camper, & spent years travelling to nearly all the provinces in Canada, & other special places, including Cape Breton Island, Cambridge Narrows, & Ayers Cliff. They camped in VT. & PA, & closer home places such as Fryeburg, Buckfield, & even Dixfield.

Joe didn't charm only people...he had a special affinity for animals, & managed to coax wild chipmunks up onto his knee where he would feed them peanuts & pet them while they ate! In later years, he enjoyed spending hours training them as he sat in the garage. He was very particular about his lawn & driveway, & got a great deal of enjoyment from riding his Cub Cadet in every season. Besides his love for God & his bride, Clarice, his greatest pride was "Nikki" his granddaughter. She stole his heart the first time they met, when she was less than a day old. They walked into the room to meet her, & she lifted her head up off her father's shoulder & looked at them both as if to say, "Hi there Grammie & Grandpa!" She spent a lot of time with them while she was growing up, & her accomplishments were & are medals of honor for both of her grandparents. Her musical abilities, then her many degrees, & knowledge of numerous languages led her to living oversees & teaching, eventually settling in France. How Joe loved to talk about their precious Nikki!

Joseph Dunham was predeceased heartbreakingly by his son, Ernest Erle Dunham, in April, 2019; his parents & all of his siblings- Reta Brockway & husband Silas; Elvie Toothaker & husband John; Amy & husband Whit Dunham; Ruby & husband Norman Spooner; James Dunham & wife Yvonne. Also by his in laws, Louise Bryant Cook, & Ernest Cook; & brother in law, Glendon Cook.

Joe is survived by his bride, Clarice Arlene Cook Dunham; granddaughter-Nicole Dunham, who has been the light of their life since the day she was born & spouse, Marie-Lise of Rouen, France; daughter in law, Terri Dunham of Norway; brothers in law, Vernon Cook & wife Mary of Leeds, ME & Bob Cook & wife, Lorna of Derry, NH; sister in law, Leanne & husband, Cliff Norton of Derry, N.H.; adopted sister in law & niece, Gracie Baker of Wilton, & Sammie Angel of Dixfield, as well as many dear nieces & nephews, & Charlene Pidacks, neighbor & very special friend & care giver

Joe was a loving, gentle, honest, & humorous man. He was true blue to his bride, & as much in love as when they were newlyweds. He is loved by so many people & will be greatly missed. He lived without regrets, thanking God for all who loved him.

A memorial service will be held Friday Nov. 1, 2019 at 11:00AM at the Dixfield Church of the Nazarene with pastor Jeff Richards officiating. A comfort reception will follow at the church. Interment will be at Gracelawn Memorial Park next to his son Ernest at a later

date. Arrangements are under the care of Wiles Remembrance Center 30 Weld St.  
Dixfield. A kind word may be left on his memory wall at [www.wilesrc.com](http://www.wilesrc.com)

# Cemetery

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## Gracelawn Memorial Park

980 Turner St.

Auburn, ME, 04210

# Events

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**NOV** **Memorial Service** 11:00AM - 12:00PM

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Dixfield Church of the Nazarene

Weld Street, Dixfield, ME, US, 04224

# Comments

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“ Will miss my Maine NAFCA friend, we had many laughs and good times together in Fryeburg. Love and hugs to Clarice and Nikki.  
Doris Lewis

Doris Lewis - November 05, 2019 at 09:20 PM

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“ Great Uncle Joe was always with a joke, a story and a smile. Many wonderful memories growing up as a kid and when you would come for a visit, see you at a relative's house or at the annual family reunions. Condolences Aunt Clarice and Nikki.  
Sending love and hugs, Kari Luce.

Kari Luce - October 30, 2019 at 01:31 PM

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“ Uncle Joe you will always be missed . Always loved your sense of humor and you used it every time I talked to you . Aunt Clarice you are in our prayers it has been a rough year for you . So happy you got to spend so many years with this loving witty man  
Love you Bunches Polly and Tom

Wandalyn Thompson - October 29, 2019 at 07:06 PM

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“ Hi Joe,  
  
What a pleasure I had to meet your beloved family.  
I'm thankful to be a part of it.  
You will always be there, through Nikki, Clarice and all the people you cherished.

Lots of Hugs and Love to the Dunham Family.

Sincerely,  
Marie-Lise





“ condolenes to Joe Dunham and family. a friend,camper, criggage player. many happy times with Joe and family. Warren Campbell and family

Donald j Bradley jr - October 29, 2019 at 04:16 PM

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“ 148 files added to the album LifeTributes



Wiles Remembrance Center and staff - October 29, 2019 at 10:47 AM

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“ Heartfelt condolences!

Missed dearly...  
Always remembered...  
Truly loved!

Robin Toothaker Ladd

Robin Ladd - October 28, 2019 at 07:07 PM

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“ Such a nice man....he did indeed always have a greeting- or a wisecrack!- when I'd walk by the house. He'll be missed..... Sympathies to Clarice and his loved ones.

Leslie S Skibitsky - October 28, 2019 at 01:57 PM