



## Arnold Lester Zajicek

October 1, 1926 - August 23, 2020

Arnold Lester Zajicek was born to James and Lillian Zajicek at their home on Oct. 1, 1926 on a farm south of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He had a three year old brother, Leonard.

The family moved to an acreage east of Cedar Rapids when Arnold was 3 years old. His mother's parents lived across the dirt road. Arnold's father did day work for a local farmer, (and later at a factory in Cedar Rapids). His mother had a garden and canned many quarts of vegetables every year. Arnold and his brother walked one mile to county school, fall, winter and spring. For Junior High School he boarded with a lady in Cedar Rapids. When he started High School he moved to Solon, IA and lived and worked on the farm of his Uncle and Aunt. He graduated in 1944. That summer he enlisted in the Navy and was sent to Farragut, Idaho for Basic Training. He rode on a railroad Boxcar Troop Train. They had wooden row boats for training. They shipped out of San Francisco under the Golden Gate Bridge. His ship was the "Hopewell" destroyer #681. The tour of duty was in the South Pacific. His ship was in the harbor of TOKYO BAY when the Peace Treaty was signed.

When Arnold returned home, he married Lucille Hipp and farmed with her father. Arnold and Lucille later divorced. The New Veteran's Hospital had been built in Iowa City, IA, and Arnold went to work there doing grounds and maintenance.

Arnold and Mary Louise Hanson (who had a son Robert) were married on Nov. 9, 1963 and moved to Coralville, Iowa, a suburb of Iowa City. He went to Refrigeration School and was head of the Air-conditioning and Refrigeration system at the Veteran's Hospital.

Arnold joined the Iowa City Masonic Lodge in 1956 and was installed as Master in 1965. A new Masonic Lodge was formed in Coralville, Iowa in 1968. He was the 1st Master of the new "Clarksville Lodge" there, and then served as secretary until 1989.

In 1969 he was asked to serve as Masonic Grand Officer as "Grand Marshall" in the Iowa Grand Lodge of Iowa for the term of 1969 and 1970. Arnold and Mary Louise traveled the state of Iowa visiting Lodges and promoting Masonry.

Arnold was elected to the Coralville City Council in 1982 and served until 1989.

Upon Mary Louise's retirement from Veteran's Hospital in 1989, they traveled in their motor home to Canada and every state in the United States, including Alaska. They had one trip to Europe with a group of friends, where they visited Germany, Czechoslovakia,

Austria and Switzerland. They, also, flew to Hawaii 3 times.

In 1993 they moved to Florida, after spending several winters there in their Motor Home. They bought a home in Lakeland in a retirement community (Foxwood Village) where they enjoyed a wonderful life with many friends. Mr. Zajicek was a member of the Kathleen Masonic Lodge No. 338. Their son, Rob Hanson, moved to Florida (previously to Arnold and Mary Lou) and married Wendy Kensler. They have two sons, Tyler and Griffin Hanson. Arnold and Mary Lou were so happy to enjoy them during their growing-up years.!

It was a wonderful life-long adventure!!!!

A celebration of life service and Masonic service for both Mary Louise and Arnold will be announced in the near future at Gentry-Morrison Funeral Home, 3350 Mall Hill Dr., Lakeland

# Cemetery

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## **Florida National Cemetery**

6502 SW 102nd Ave.

Bushnell, FL, 33513

# Comments

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“ Arnie was a shipmate of mine on the USS Hopewell (DD-681). I talked with him for many hours on the phone both before and after Mary Lou passed. His mind was extraordinarily sharp and his recall of his years on the Hopewell was amazing. He had a wonderful, mellifluous announcer's voice that I always envied. My heart aches for him and the family and I will miss our conversations terribly.

Arnie will be specifically honored during the Memorial Service at the USS Hopewell National Biennial Reunion in Norfolk, Virginia next year for his loyal service to America aboard the USS Hopewell.

Any member of the family, please contact me (417) 779-3643 (H) or (417) 598-0244 (C) regarding arrangements.

Doug Graybeal, President  
USS Hopewell (DD-681) Association

**Doug Graybel** - September 16, 2020 at 07:34 PM

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“ Arnie became my Uncle when he married Lucille Hipp. Although he and Lucille divorced Arnie was an "uncle" to me until his last breath. Each summer when they journeyed back to Iowa Arnie and Mary Lou would come and spend time with me and my wife, regardless of where we were living. Our times together were always memorable. They encouraged to be travelers as they had been and they relived their memories as we shared our adventures with them. We will lovingly remember Arnie and Mary Lou till the day we die. May God care for them.

Merlin and Sharon Studt

**Merlin L Studt** - August 29, 2020 at 01:29 PM