



Gerald Tatum

June 25, 1918 - April 15, 2017

Gerald M. Tatum, 98, passed away peacefully Saturday, April 15, 2017. Gerald was born June 25, 1918 to Max Tatum and Maude May “Spencer” Tatum in their Chestnut Street home in Carthage, Missouri. His beloved wife, Elsie Tatum, preceded him in death. Having lived through the “Great Depression” and orphaned at an early age, he lived an extraordinary life seeing the world, following a path often not paved.

Leaving Carthage at an early age, he would often hop trains to destinations such as Kansas City, Chicago and California. He bravely joined the Merchant Marines prior to the United States entering WWII. He assisted in the protection of supply transport ships bound for overseas. He enlisted in the US Army prior to America entering the war, serving from September 1940 until December 1944 and ended his career as a First Sergeant with 10 years total service to his country. When America joined the allies in WWII, Mr. Tatum served in the African Campaign battling Rommel’s army throughout Africa. From Africa, he fought ashore with the second wave of invasion forces on Normandy at Omaha Beach on D-Day and then on to the liberation of Europe. Receiving the American Defense Medal, as well as the European African Middle Eastern Medal, he was then discharged with honors in 1944.

After serving his country, Mr. Tatum married his true love, Elsie, and returned to Carthage, which he always described as “God’s Country”. Joining the

Carthage VFW Post #2590, he served as Post Commander on several occasions. "Giz", as he is known to his friends, worked 28 years at Hercules Powder Plant (now known as Dyno). Some of his greatest joys was to spend time with a beer and fishing pole enjoying the rivers and lakes together with family and friends. Weekend traditions often involved spending time at Table Rock Lake fishing, camping and swimming with his beloved family. He always said his family was his greatest treasure and made sure that his family knew he appreciated them and the joy they brought to his life. His true gift was the unconditional love he gave his family their whole lives and the lasting legacy on how he lived his life. "Papo" was loved greatly by his friends and family and will be missed forever.

Mr. Tatum is survived by his son George Pope of Colorado and daughter Judy Clardy of California, four grandchildren: Stacy Kirkham of Texas, Laura Anderson, Lisa Tubbs and Scott Pope, all of Colorado and seven great grandchildren, who he adored and they adored him greatly: Ryan, Justin, Ashley, Nicole, Tyler, Kyle and Stella.

Graveside service with military honors will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 29, 2017 at Park Cemetery in Carthage. Visitation will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, April 28, 2017 at Ulmer Funeral Home.

Memorial contributions may be made to Avalon Hospice in Carthage in care of Ulmer Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Park Cemetery

801 South Baker
Carthage, MO

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **28**. 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Ulmer Funeral Home
1208 S. Garrison
Carthage, MO 64836
(417) 358-2222
ulmerfh@gmail.com
<https://www.ulmerfh.com/>

Service

APR **29**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Park Cemetery
801 South Baker
Carthage, MO

Tribute Wall

NP

“ *It was an honor to serve Mr. Tatum during his time in Texas. I could quickly tell that he was a very special man who loved his family and who was loved by many. Continued prayers to the family and all God's best for you in the future.*

Chaplain Nolan Porter

Nolan Porter - April 20, 2017 at 11:06 AM

SK

Thank you Nolan

Stacy Kirkham - April 21, 2017 at 10:14 PM



“ Where do i even start? Papo was one of the greatest people i have ever known. I am genuinely grateful and blessed to have been a granddaughter to such a wonderful man. I will never forget all of the memories with our big family at his home in Carthage. Every summer, my mom, my sister, my aunt and I would pile up and drive 12 hours to the place where so many unforgettable childhood memories were made. From eating all of his toaster strudel frosting packets (he ate his toaster strudels plain!!!) to catching fireflies in the backyard and coming back inside excited to show off a mason jar filled with lighting bugs, Papo was there for it all. Always smiling, happy to have literally just have our company. He called us kids "crumb snatchers," and i was always "The Mouth" because I never shut up:) For those of you who did not know Papo, here's a list of things you would have learned very quickly if you did have that chance. He was a bean soup, meatloaf, jelly bean and toaster strudel loving guy who told the best stories i've ever heard. Man, he had so many. He would always say, "That Elsie, man she was the most beautiful women i had ever seen in my life." And because of him, I know what I deserve, what I want, and where i want to end up. He refused to eat anything that "swims or flies," and he had the most amazing smile. His laugh was like music; I could've listened to that laugh all day long. I remember shooting off fireworks in front of his house with Aunt Lisa and Aunt Stacy, to both mom and Papo's dismay. He always talked about Uncle Scott like he was the best child to ever exist: "That Scott, i don't think he ever caused anybody any trouble." He loved every part of our big family, despite our imperfections. And let me tell you, it showed on his walls and tables, as they were COVERED with hundreds of pictures of all of us. He had such a big heart. I will never forget Papo, nor will I forget a single one of the memories made there with him. Rest easy Papo, I'll love you forever

Nicole Anderson - April 19, 2017 at 10:20 PM

SK

Beautiful Nicole ❤️

Stacy Kirkham - April 21, 2017 at 10:18 PM

DD

“ *I never knew your Grandpa but I remember the amazing stories you would tell us during our years on Rehab. I also remember how special he was to you. God Bless. I wish you peace.*

Donna Dougherty - April 18, 2017 at 07:51 PM

SK

“ *We will be announcing funeral plans soon in Carthage*

Stacy Kirkham - April 18, 2017 at 12:30 PM

SK

“ *My grandfather gave his family unconditional love our whole lives. He lived an extraordinary life and loved Carthage. He always called it "Gods country". Being 98 means he lived during most of the 20th century....think about all the discoveries he witnessed. He used to tell stories about his first telephone. His most important job though was being a role model for his family. He leaves a lasting legacy through the way he lived his life and I will love and miss him forever. Love you Papo!!*
Stacy ❤️

Stacy Kirkham - April 18, 2017 at 11:56 AM