



Larry Melander

January 9, 1933 - March 31, 2021

Larry Melander, age 88, of Alta, Iowa died on Wednesday, March 31, 2021 at the Methodist Manor Retirement Community in Storm Lake, Iowa.

Private Family Service will take place on Tuesday, April 6, 2021. Burial will be in the Scandinavian Cemetery in Alta. Public visitation will be held on Monday, April 5, 2021 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in ALTA. Masks are required for all guests in attendance. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Alta is in charge of the arrangements.

Larry was the son of Harry and Ethel (King) Melander, born on January 9, 1933, in Mentor, Kansas. He was baptized as an infant and later confirmed.

Larry graduated from Kipp High School in 1951, and later that year he enlisted in the United States Air Force to proudly serve his country as an airplane and engine mechanic. Larry married his high school sweetheart, Eleanor Henry, on December 21, 1952, in Salina, Kansas. They made their first home in Roswell, New Mexico, where Larry was stationed in the Air Force. It was there that their daughter, Melody, was born. He was honorably discharged on December 1955. Larry took great pride in being a mechanic and often talked about working on the B-36 and his Air Force days.

In 1957, Larry and Eleanor moved to Sioux Rapids where they purchased the Gambles Store. For over 30 years, they took pleasure in running their Gambles businesses in both Sioux Rapids and Alta. Later they would call Apple Valley, Minnesota, their home. There Larry worked at Apple Valley Villa, a senior living complex. He enjoyed his work, but most of all the residents and staff.

In 2007, Larry retired and moved back to Alta after Eleanor passed. The simplest pleasures in life brought great joy to Larry. He loved to creatively cook, including making cookies for the neighbor kids and churches, had a flair for a fun time, and had an uncanny ability to make both conversation and jokes. He was a storyteller and enjoyed visiting with

people and had a knack for fixing about anything. His reply when asked “how he was doing” was “you do the best with what you got!”

Those left to cherish his memory include his daughter, Melody (Jim “J.W.”) Buckendahl of Alta, Iowa; grandchildren: Jill Buckendahl of Austin, Texas; Jared Buckendahl of Waukee, Iowa; Tyler Buckendahl of Waukee, Iowa; Ryan Buckendahl of Alta, Iowa; sisters-in-law: Vaughn Melander, Verlene Hayden and Donna (Melvin) Griggs; brothers-in-law, Bill Henry and Darwin (Nadine) Henry; many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Larry was preceded in death by his wife, Eleanor Melander; his parents, Harry and Ethel Melander, three brothers: Vincent, Harry, and Bob and sister, Harriet; and sister-in-law, Arlene (Harold) Hedstrom.

Cemetery Details

Scandinavian Cemetery

5753 50th Ave
Alta, IA 51002

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 5. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - Alta
301 Alta Vista Street
Alta, IA 51002
(712) 284-2141
jensenfuneralhomes@gmail.com
<https://www.fratzkejensen.com>

Tribute Wall



“ *Meat & Cheese Sympathy Gift Crate was purchased for the family of Larry Melander.*



April 07, 2021 at 12:53 PM

KS

“ *Goodbye Uncle Larry, you were the sweetest, funny Uncle. We spent a lot of time with you and Aunt Eleanor during my growing up years. We always had so much fun at your house, snow mobiling, and lots of fun times. May you rest in peace and enjoy your forever life with Aunt Eleanor. Love you, Kay*



Kay swietek - April 06, 2021 at 11:46 AM

PC

“ *I always enjoyed visiting with Larry before the Saturday night services at St. Mark Lutheran Church, He always had a smile and something positive to share. Prayers of comfort to the family as you celebrate his special life. Phyllis Caradine*

Phyllis Caradine - April 05, 2021 at 06:47 PM

FH

“ *2 files added to the tribute wall*



Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Homes - April 05, 2021 at 01:45 PM

JG

“ *Sad to hear of Larry passing away. He was the best neighbor and kindest person in Alta! We were often blessed with his famous moon pies and other yummy cookies! My girls still refer to him as the Cookie man!! I am sure he is baking cookies in Heaven.*

JoMarie Wells and Girls - April 04, 2021 at 03:56 PM

SR

“ Sympathy to the family. What a wonderful man and friend Larry was to our whole family. Larry was kind and always thought of others. Our family is better for knowing such a fine man. God’s Blessings.

Sally Radke - April 03, 2021 at 01:40 PM

BG

“ Our sympathy, thoughts, and prayers to the Melander Family.
Remembering Larry as such a friendly, sweet man. RIP 🙏

Mike and Bonnie Goebel



Bonnie Goebel - April 03, 2021 at 12:07 PM

TB

“ Tamara & Bruce Nicole, Luke, & Briann purchased the Sympathy Arrangement In Basket (Large) - Multicolor Bright Mixed Flowers for the family of Larry Melander.



Tamara & Bruce Nicole, Luke, & Briann - April 02, 2021 at 02:00 PM

NL

“ Nancy Ledoux lit a candle in memory of Larry Melander



Nancy Ledoux - April 02, 2021 at 01:13 PM

JN

“ I had many good talks with Larry at the store and especially when I worked for Harry. If I had a frustrating day I would go and visit with Larry about my day and always went home feeling better!

John Nordstrom - April 01, 2021 at 06:27 PM

 Kathy Grienke

“ So sorry for your loss, keeping your family in my prayers!

Kathy Grienke - April 01, 2021 at 07:38 AM

TP

“ Thomas Prchal lit a candle in memory of Larry Melander



thomas prchal - March 31, 2021 at 07:34 PM

PG

“ OUR SYMPATHY TO THE MELANDER FAMILY IN THE LOSS OF LARRY. A CANDLE HAS BEEN LIT IN HIS MEMORY. THOUGHTS & PRAYERS TO THE FAMILY.



LARY & PATTY GUNVILLE
STORM LAKE, IOWA

PATTY GUNVILLE - March 31, 2021 at 04:38 PM

PH

“ So very sorry for the loss of this amazing friend and resident of the Alta Community! Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the family!

Pam Henderson

Pam Henderson - March 31, 2021 at 04:04 PM

PH

“ Pam Henderson lit a candle in memory of Larry Melander



Pam Henderson - March 31, 2021 at 04:00 PM

KW

“ Sorry to hear of the loss of your dad, Melody. I always enjoyed him at the Gambles store. And in more recent years when he would bring in cookies to the bank. He always had the smile, and made you smile back.

Kim Walsh - March 31, 2021 at 03:18 PM

SP

“ So sorry to hear about the passing of your father. He was so good to me when I moved to Alta so many years ago. He was a wonderful man that loved to share a story. He loved to talk about his family. You could tell they were very important to him. Our prayers are with you all..
Kim and Susan Piercy

Susan Marie Piercy - March 31, 2021 at 02:44 PM

CC

*So sorry to hear of your dad's passing Melody!
May your memories of him comfort you & your family. God's Peace...Dan & Carmen
Cameron*

Carmen Cameron - April 03, 2021 at 09:01 PM