



Crossing the Bar

*Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,
Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.*



In Loving Memory of Alton Vernald Hillesland

Born to Lottie and Ted Hillesland
July 2, 1928 ~ Calmar, Iowa

Returned to His Heavenly Father
February 10, 2024 ~ Sidney, Montana

Funeral Services
Friday, February 16, 2024 at 11:00 am
Pella Lutheran Church ~ Sidney, Montana
Luncheon to Follow

Officiating
Pastor Barb Haugerud

Casketbearers
Kaitlyn Hillesland Larysa Hurst Christian Keller
Meghan Kacia Hosmer Daniel Hillesland
John JD Hillesland Matthew Doherty
Terran Hillesland Brianne Loftsgard

Honorary Bearers
Hubert Johnson Dr. Stan Lindblom Eddie Vaira

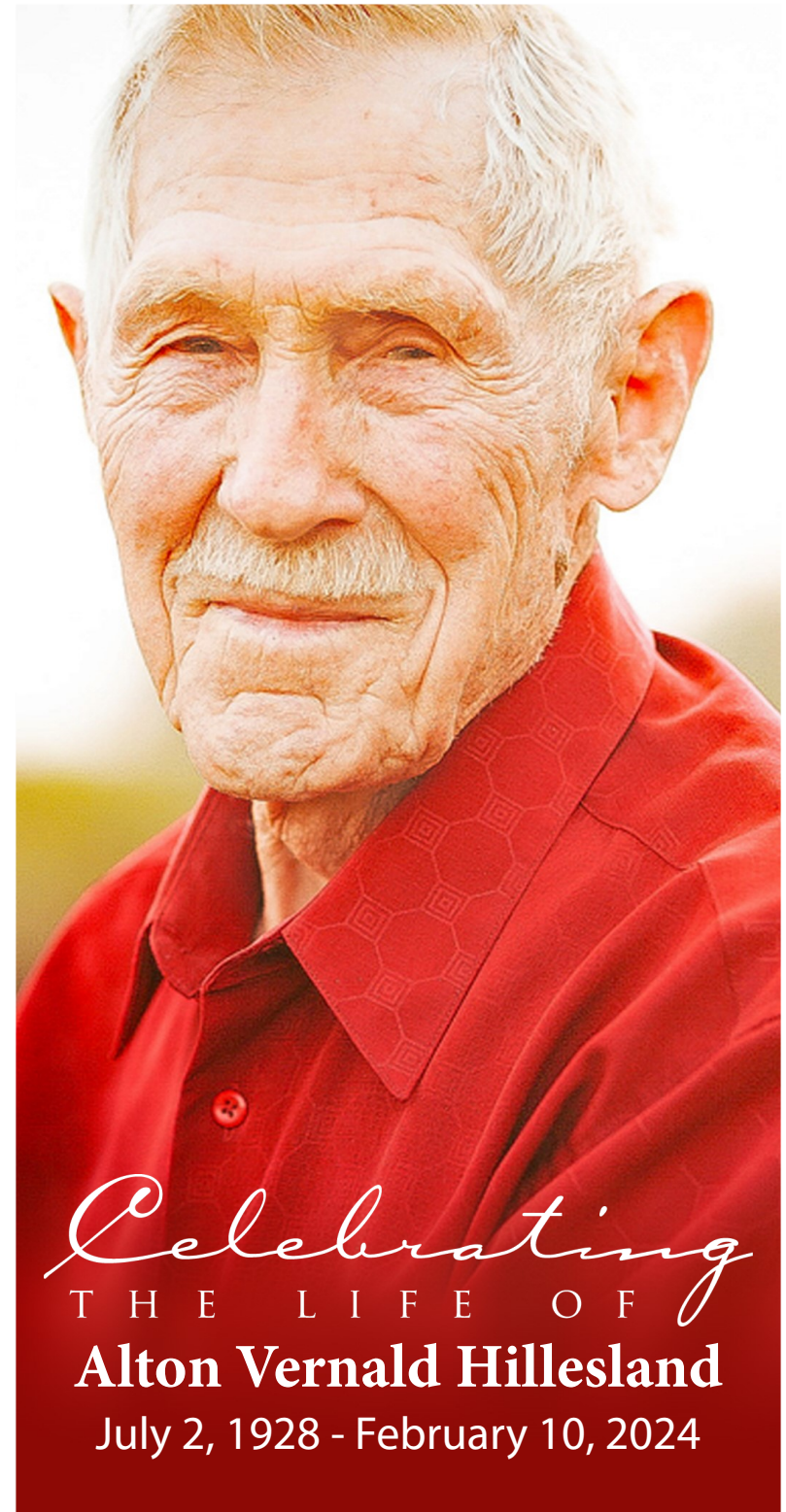
Ushers
Terry Meldahl Allen Thiessen

Music
"I Was There to Hear Your Borneing Cry"
"I Know of a Sleep In Jesus' Name"
"On Our Way Rejoicing"
Pianists: Greg Miller Synneva Meldahl

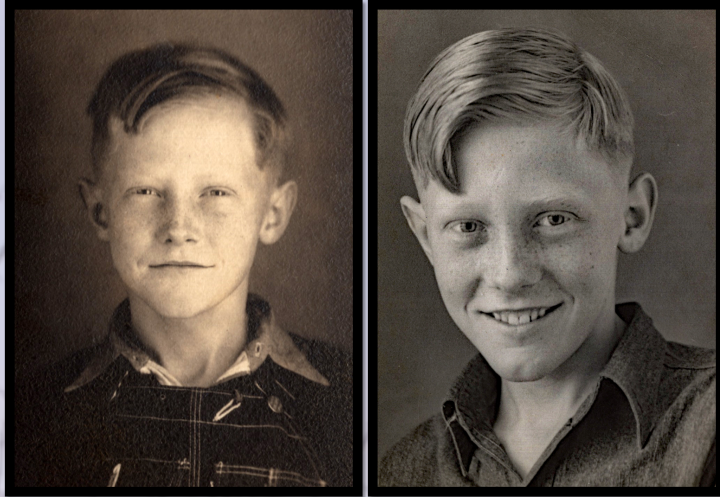
"Beautiful Scandalous Night"
Ruthann Hillesland

"Hymn of Heaven"
Meghan Kacia Hosmer Brianne Loftsgard

Arrangements By
Fulkerson Stevenson Funeral Home
Sidney, Montana



Celebrating
THE LIFE OF
Alton Vernald Hillesland
July 2, 1928 - February 10, 2024



Alton Vernald Hillesland passed from this life on February 10, 2024, at his home, surrounded by family.

He was born on July 2, 1928, to Ted and Lottie Hillesland in Calmar, Iowa and grew up on the family farm with three brothers: Dalos, Glenn, and Harvey. He married Harriet Ohnstad and they enjoyed 62 years of marriage. He later married long-time family friend Ruthann Knutson.

His 95 years were filled with the love of learning and his unwavering, steadfast faith in God. He earned his bachelor's degree from Luther College in Decorah, IA and Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. He served as pastor in Spring Grove, MN; Willow City, ND; country churches around Parshall, ND; Mondovi, WI; Culbertson and Bainville, MT; Sidney, MT; and Watford City, ND.

Upon retirement as pastor, he was asked to be the building inspector for the city of Sidney and Richland County and served in that role until age 89. His desire to help others and love of medicine led him to become a certified EMT. He served in that role through age 85.

His list of hobbies continued to grow through the years. He taught himself to play the guitar, banjo, mandolin, violin, and most recently the piano. He also taught himself Norwegian rosemaling, oil painting, wood carving, sketching, wood turning, fine wood working, and housebuilding. He also authored daily devotions for Christ in Our Home.



He made space for his ever-growing wood shop in each of their homes. His woodworking skills included building a pull-behind camper complete with a kitchen on one side and wardrobe on the other side that was used for annual summer camping vacations. One of the biggest woodworking challenges Dad tackled in his shop was his History Clock. It was a project that took him just over 20 years. It is a testament to his drive and determination.

He was an active member in Kiwanis for many years. He met Monday through Friday for over thirty years with his Coffee Buddies ('the grandpas') and was always up for a game of Pinochle.

Philanthropy and giving back to the communities he lived in was something he felt very strongly about. As a result, he enjoyed supporting many different organizations in the communities where he lived, including serving as a founding member of the McKenzie County Heritage Park in Watford City.

Alton is survived by his wife, Ruthann; four children, Tom (Marie), Jeff (Sally), Chris (Billie), and Sana (Ken) Keller; five stepchildren, Chad (Brad) Knelson, Joe (Jeni) Knutson, Sandra (Mark) Fetting, Marty Knutson (Jenifer Grau), and Bethany (Erick) Spiegel; 23 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. Adding to the family, reconnecting with long-lost relatives, and discovering new family was a joy throughout his life. One of his greatest joys was spending time with all his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents, brothers, first wife, and grandson Jade.



Do Not Stand At My Grave

Do not stand at my grave and weep, I am not there, I do not sleep. I am a thousand winds that blow, I am the diamond glint on snow. I am the sunlight on ripened grain. I am the gentle autumn rain. When you wake in the morning hush; I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circling flight. I am the soft starlight at night. Do not stand at my grave and cry. I am not there, I did not die.