

Richard "Dick" Van Pelt

Richard "Dick" Van Pelt was born in Rapid City in 1926 to Leona and Verne Van Pelt, the 4th of 5 children. He lived a life of adventure from the time of his boyhood when he roamed the ridges and canyons in his big backyard, north and east of Rapid Creek & M hill with his friends. He attended Garfield Elementary and even kept in touch with some of his childhood friends in his later years.

At 17, he joined the U. S. Navy where he served during World War II. After the war, he returned to Rapid City and completed high school with other veterans who served in the war. He married June Gustafson in 1949, with whom he had 4 children, and later married Elena Parker in 1981. He was a long time employee of Robbins and Stearns Lumber Company, where as a building materials salesman he thoroughly enjoyed meeting people and making friends wherever he traveled. Friendly and compassionate he frequently gave lifts to hitch-hikers.

Through his work, he provided well for his family. His creativity showed in the landscaping projects he did throughout his life. He enjoyed gardening and much of the barren lot of his first new home was transformed into a park-like atmosphere of flower and vegetable gardens with rock walls and pathways. An excellent carpenter, he was forever building and remodeling houses. In later years, he supervised construction projects of his kids and grandkids.

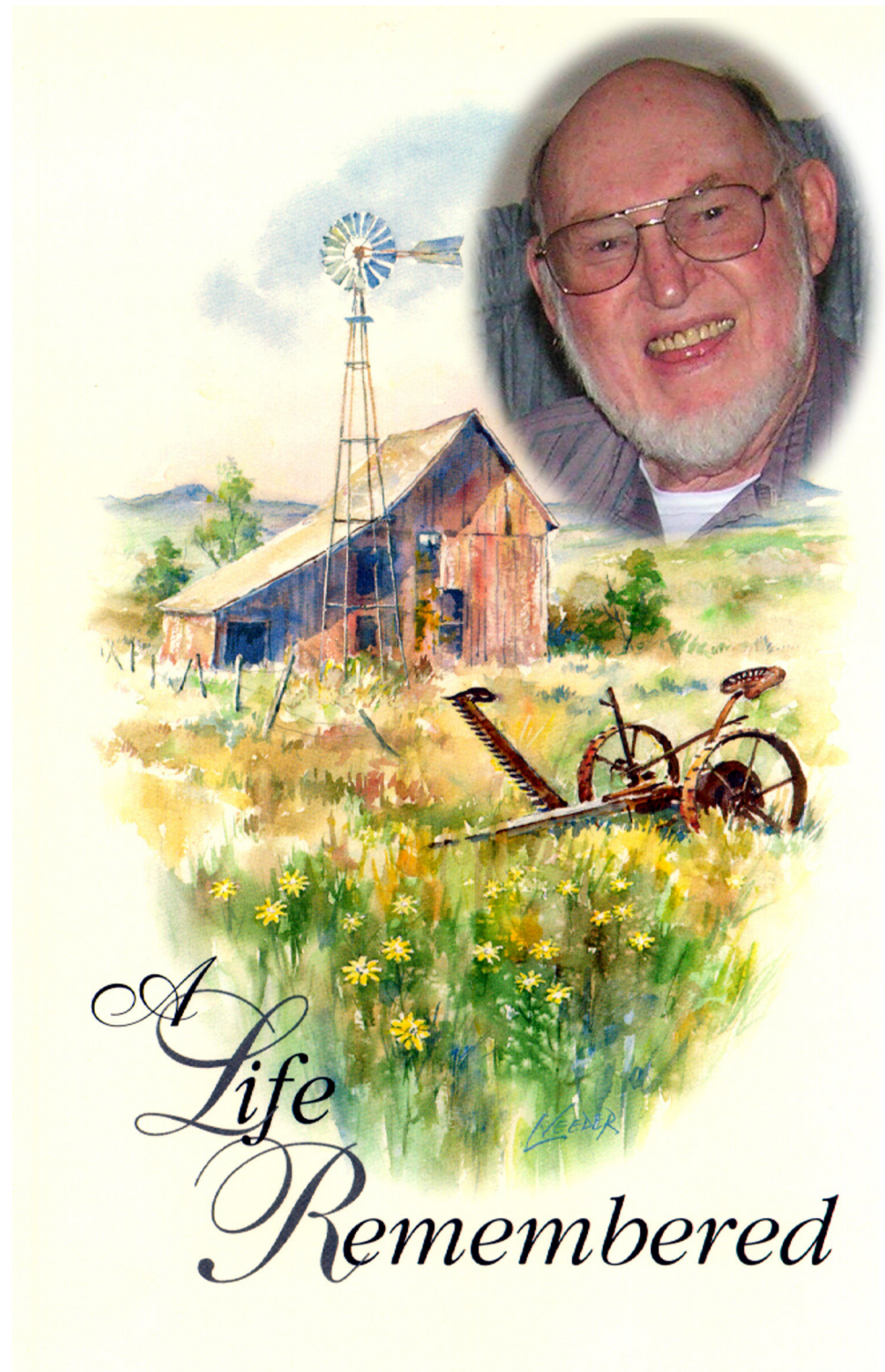
His love of western history led to his volunteering as a docent at the Journey Museum. An avid outdoorsman, he enjoyed spending time in the Black Hills and at his cabin near Blue Bell Lodge in Custer State Park. A hobby throughout much of his life was stereoscopic photography with which he documented his trips and family life. He lived life to the fullest by sharing backpack, white water raft, and spelunking adventures with his sons. Reading about faraway places in his vast collection of National Geographic magazines, he later traveled to many exotic locations from Alaska to Australia to satisfy his passion for adventure. Later in life when no longer able to travel, he turned to stamp collecting to explore history, the outdoors, and worldwide cultures.

Dick, 85, of Rapid City passed into eternal life on Saturday February 25, 2012, at Fort Meade Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Sturgis, surrounded by his family.

Survivors include his wife, Elena, Rapid City; daughter, Susan (John) Wagner, Rapid City; sons, David, Hilo, Hawaii, Daniel, Dallas, Texas, and James (Yanaporn), Poulsbo, Washington; eight grandchildren; and two great-grand children.

He was preceded in death by his parent; three brothers, Bob, Harold, and Virgil; and grandson, Timothy.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.





I'm Free

*Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path
God has laid you see.
I took His hand when I heard His call
I turned my back and left it all.*

*I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play.
Tasks left undone
must stay that way
I found the peace
at the close of day.*

*If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered joys - -
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss
Oh yes, these things I too will miss.*

*Be not burdened
with times of sorrow.
I wish you the sunshine
of tomorrow.*

*My life's been full, I savored much,
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.*

*Perhaps my time seemed all too brief - -
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your hearts, and peace to thee - -
God wanted me now: He set me free.*

In Loving Memory Of

Richard "Dick" Van Pelt

Born

June 22, 1926
Rapid City, South Dakota

Died

February 25, 2012
Fort Meade, South Dakota

Vigil and Rosary

Tuesday, February 28, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.
Our Lady's Chapel

Clergy ~ Father Ed Vanorny

Accompanist ~ Angela Weber

Cantor ~ Theresa Witte

Mass of Christian Burial

Wednesday, February 29, 2012, at 10:00 a.m.
Our Lady's Chapel

Celebrant ~ Father Tim Castor

Accompanist ~ Brenda Schneller

Cantor ~ Theresa Witte

Pallbearers

John Wagner ~ Kevin Wagner ~ James Van Pelt
Forrest Van Pelt ~ Daniel Van Pelt

Military Honors

Sturgis Veterans Honor Guard

Interment

Black Hills National Cemetery at 3:00 p.m.