

In Loving Memory Of

James Owen Aplan

Born

May 17, 1931
Pierre, South Dakota

Died

December 26, 2018
Piedmont, South Dakota

Funeral Service

Wednesday, January 2, 2019, at 11:00 a.m.
High Plains Heritage Center
Spearfish, South Dakota

Officiant

Chaplain Herbert Cleveland

Speaker

Jim Thompson

Musicians

Rhonda Stearns ~ Dan Sahr ~ Lorrie Redfield

Musical Selections

“Somewhere Over The Rainbow”
“An Evening Prayer”
“God Bless America”

Pallbearers

Lee Madison ~ Duane Reichert ~ Larry Ness
Monte Clark ~ Ivan Hovland ~ Doug Engebretson

Military Honors

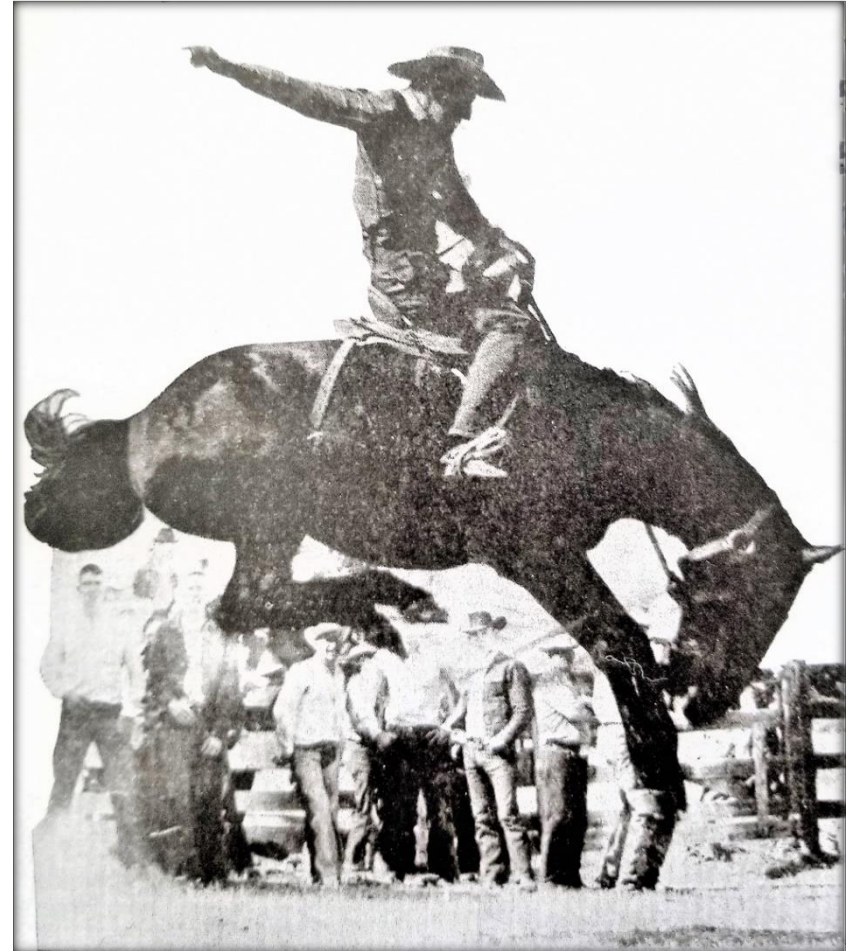
Sturgis Veterans Honor Guard

Interment

Black Hills National Cemetery
Sturgis, South Dakota

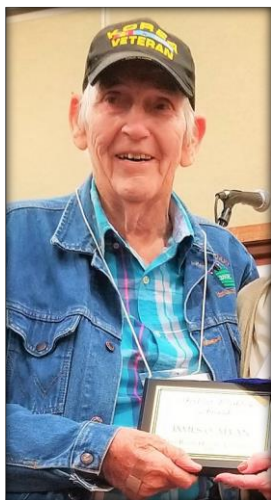
*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch at
High Plains Heritage Center immediately following the funeral service.
We thank you for your presence and condolences.*

In Loving Memory Of



James Owen Aplan

1931 ~ 2018



James Owen Aplan

Shortly after enjoying a televised Christmas choral presentation early on December 26, at their home in Piedmont, South Dakota, Jim Aplan at a bowl of his favorite ice cream, then gently passed away in the loving arms of his wife and a grandson. He was 87.

Born on May 17, 1931, the third and last child of Helen (Fischer) and Frank Aplan, James Owen Aplan was raised in Fort Pierre, South Dakota, in the long shadow of a line of French and Indian fur traders.

Aplan's great-great grandfather, Sefroy Iyotte, worked for the St. Louis, Missouri-based fur traders, Pierre Chouteau, Jr. and Co., which pioneered steamboat travel on the Missouri River. Iyotte and his brothers-in-law, Antoine and Nicholas Janis, were prime interpreters and authors in the making of the 1868 Ft. Laramie Treaty.

At an early age, Jim tended the furnace, shoveled snow, or packaged merchandise at the family business, Fischer Brothers general store. As a boy he exhibited an enterprising nature when he used his earnings to buy various cowboy and native items from customers. They in turn, would spend the money at the store, and this was the foundation of his lifelong antique collecting.

At eight years old, Jim won a national contest for hide skinning. He learned to cowboy at Charles Carlisle's Bad River Ranch. Walking there from town along the railroad line, he would hunt wild game, which went into the cooking pot of Carlisle's wife, Marie, formerly his mother, Helen's, domestic help when child rearing.

Jim attended the Abbey School for Boys in Cañon City, CO, where he developed his taste for the increasingly popular past-time of rodeoing, which led to a 13-year career of saddle bronc busting, bull riding, and clowning – much to his mother's chagrin.

His career in the rodeo arena was interrupted when he was drafted, and served in the Korean War which he survived due to his gunsmithing studies at Trinidad State Junior College, in Colorado. He was one of only six soldiers extracted from 6,000 dispatched to the battle front: His skills were needed elsewhere for weapons inspection. Sgt. Aplan returned after his stint in 1953 and 1954 to enroll at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, TX. He graduated in Industrial Arts in 1956 and received his master's degree in 1957.

Moving back to South Dakota, he became a vocational trainer at the Ft. Meade Veterans Administration and opened Jim's Gun Shop in nearby Boulder Canyon. In about 1966, he opened a gift shop on Main Street in Keystone, where he showcased his collections of guns, cowboy memorabilia, and Indian artifacts.

He oversaw liquidation of the family store and assets in Ft. Pierre from 1968 to 1972 then went into banking until 1987. He worked at the Onida Bank, the Okaton-Midland Bank, and the Hulett Bank, which he founded in Wyoming.

Jim and his wife, Sturgis-local business partner Peg (formerly Kaubisch) have operated Antiques & Art near Piedmont, traveling to offer collectibles throughout the West and Midwest at trade shows and rare-book exchanges.

The couple shared a passion for preservation of genuine Americana, demonstrated through years of dedication to the



High Plains Heritage Center, the Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center, the Augustana Center for Western Studies, the West River Historical Society and the Heritage Center at Red Cloud Indian School, among other altruistic endeavors.

A longtime board member of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, Aplan garnered the Preservation of South Dakota History Award in 1981; the Outstanding Service to Dakota Artists award in 1982; and the Founders Award of the Dakota Territory Gun Collectors in 1986 and 2011. Jim was inducted to the South Dakota Hall of Fame in 1988. In 2001, he earned the Distinguished Alumnus of Sul Ross University award, in 2006 the Casey Tibbs Foundation Award, and in 2009 the Dedication of the Match of Champions Rodeo at Ft. Pierre. In 2013 Jim and Peg received the South Dakota Governor's Award for History. In 2018, he received the Herb Blakely Award, named after the founder of the West River History Conference launched in 1993.

A story-teller who never lost a twinkle in his bright blue eyes, Jim weathered hardship and adversity with a positive viewpoint, serving as a model for family and friends. Whatever happened, Jim was fond of encouraging loved ones to remember: "I had all the fun."

In a letter to family members, at what he termed "a young 86", he hinted at the reason for ending his rodeo riding in 1958. "What a joy it is to travel the rodeo road with cloth diapers, two babies 11 months apart..., and very dirty gas station restrooms. Thank God for a few flowing creeks along the way. I think all that 'FUN' is what made me quit."

In addition to many friends, admirers, and business associates, James O. Aplan is survived by his wife of 26 years, Peg Aplan; sister, Carla Sahr; brother, Frank Aplan; son, Arthur and his wife, Anja, and their daughter, Irene; daughter, Rose and her husband, Bob Diez, their son, Robert "Bobby," and daughter, Georgia; daughter, Kathy Aplan and her son, Alexander; daughter, Karen Darling, her son, Zachary, and daughter, Carly; daughter, Karla Aplan; son, Morgan and his wife, Elysia; daughter, Travis Felts, her children, Joshua and Paige; son, Brent Barker and his sons, Ashton and Logan.

Contributions to the James O. Aplan Memorial can be sent to: 21424 Clover Place, Piedmont, SD 57769.

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

