

Death and Memorial Notice

RICHARD H. BEKKEVAR

**April 21, 1923
August 17, 2019**

Pioneer Richard (Dick) Huffman Bekkevar passed away at the age of 96, at home with his family, from dementia on August 17, 2019. Dick, born on April 21, 1923, was the third of four children born to Olaf and Anna Bekkevar.

Dick met Winona Lotzgesell (also from a pioneer family), at a dance at the Fairview Grange Hall and they married June 16, 1946; they danced whenever they could through 73 years of marriage.

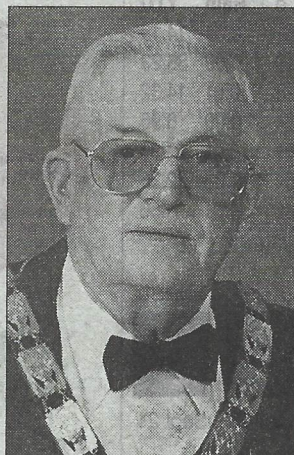
With the exception of his time served in the Merchant Marines during World War II, and traveling for work on construction jobs, he resided his entire life on the family farm on Highway 101, east of Blyn, formerly known as Little Michigan Settlement.

Dick had a very interesting life having lived through the Depression, Prohibition, and World War II. He told many stories about them and was a wealth of knowledge on the history of the area. He attended Little Michigan school until the 9th grade and graduated from Sequim High School, class of 1941, of which he was the last known classmate to survive.

He told about starting



Richard H. Bekkevar



school in Sequim and while waiting for the school bus, they would draw a circle in the middle of Highway 101 and shoot marbles; if a car came, they would get up, wait until it passed, then resume the game. He played football in high school and they were undefeated his senior year; he was also active in the Future Farmers of America (FFA) and the wrestling team. During his senior year in high school, Dick drove school bus; he picked up kids in the area, parked the bus, went to class with everyone, drove them home each afternoon, then parked the bus at home each night to do it again the next day.

Dick served in the Merchant Marines in the Pacific during World War II and saw action in the South

Pacific serving on both Liberty and Victory ships.

In 1950 he joined the Union of Operating Engineers Local 302, to operate the pioneer CAT that started construction of the road to Hurricane Ridge; being the first person up there on a bulldozer, he told stories of sliding sideways, downhill, on the rock, building a road so others could follow. He said many men walked off the hill when the fog cleared in the mornings and they would see how far down it was to the bottom; they thought he was crazy and he said, "they had no guts for being scared."

He worked on construction jobs, operating heavy equipment, until 1977 when he started Bekkevar Well Drilling. He continued that business until the year

2000 at the age of 77.

He was very active in the Sequim Masonic Lodge #213, of which he was Master, in 1959 and 2002, and Right Worship Master of the Olympic Peninsula Lodge of Past Masters in 1960.

Dick was a charter member of Sequim Elks Lodge 2642; he was the third person to be Exalted Ruler and was very instrumental in purchasing land and building the current lodge. He donated his time and materials drilling the well for the Elks Lodge and the Dungeness Schoolhouse.

He was also active in the Grange serving as Master of Rhododendron, Sequim Prairie, Jefferson County Pomona, and Deputy of the State Grange Master for Jefferson County for 15 years; he led the installation team for many years thereafter. He was an excellent ritualist in all three organizations. Dick and Winona were Grand Pioneers of the Sequim Irrigation Festival in 2003.

Dick and Winona enjoyed traveling and visited many places in the United States with friends or the Travelks; they visited his family's homeland of Norway and also toured New Zealand and Australia.

One thing people said that was unique about Dick was his strength and his

ability to buck hay bales with a pitchfork, putting them up on top of a load of hay, even in his 50's.

He was preceded in death by his siblings, Elida Smith, Laura Bekkevar, and Sue Dolan; a son, Richard Leroy Bekkevar; and daughter, Loretta Grant.

He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Winona; daughters and sons, Chris Baker, Aleta (Mark) Smith, Dave (Trish) Bekkevar, Dorinda (Jeff) Becker, Jim (Andrea) Bekkevar, and son-in-law Fred Grant, all of Sequim; also, 14 grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren, and 15 great-great-grandchildren.

He loved his family, the farm, and his pioneer heritage and was proud of all of them. He loved to work and this was instilled in his children; he said, "if you wanted something, with hard work and perseverance you can make it happen."

The family would like to thank Hospice and give special thanks to caregiver, Andrea Chandler; she was an angel taking caring of Dad in his last days.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Hospice.

Services will be held Saturday, September 7th, 11:00 AM, at the Sequim Masonic Lodge (5th and Pine, in Sequim); refreshments to follow.