



Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems

August 14, 1941 - June 17, 2022

Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems, 80, of Grand Island passed away at his home surrounded by his family on Friday, June 17, 2022.

A visitation will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, June 24th, at All Faiths Funeral Home in Grand Island.

A Memorial service and Celebration of Mel's life will be held at Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church in Grand Island on Saturday, June 25th, at 10 a.m. Pastor Steven Peeler will officiate. The service will be streamed via Facebook on Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church's Facebook page. Military honors will be provided by the United States Army and Grand Island Veterans Honor Guard. A private inurnment will take place at a later date.

Mel was born August 14, 1941, in Hastings, the son of Darrow and Maxine (Liedtke) Sems. He grew up in Grand Island, attended Jefferson Elementary and Walnut Jr. High School, and graduated from Grand Island Senior High, class of 1960.

On January 19, 1964, Mel married Marlys Christensen. Their union was blessed with two children. Michelle was born in 1968 and Martin in 1971.

Mel entered the United States Army on February 28, 1966, serving during the

Vietnam Era. Marlys went with him on his tour in Germany. He was honorably discharged at the rank of Sergeant on February 2, 1968.

He was employed with Dramco Tool Company for 34 years, retiring in 2016. He often spoke of lessons he learned and skills he acquired at Island Supply Co. and on a bridge construction crew in the 1960s. He was a member of Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church and previously served on the Church Council and Endowment Committee.

Mel was passionate about the outdoors and enjoyed hunting and fishing. He belonged to the Grand Island Rifle Club and served for a time on the Board of Directors. He was a certified Hunter Safety and handgun instructor and especially loved to teach courses for youth and women. He also volunteered at the club in countless capacities.

Later in life Mel became very skilled at wood carving. One of his special gifts was the carving of handheld "Comfort Crosses," which gave solace to many people experiencing health challenges and grief.

Mel and Marlys enjoyed traveling through Europe while Mel was stationed in Germany. In their later years they traveled throughout the United States. Two of their most memorable trips included one to Alaska and one to Hawaii with their children and grandchildren to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

Spending time with his family, including his grandchildren, was Mel's greatest joy. He involved the kids in building, painting, and carving, creating as many activities, games, and memories as he could with them. He attended the majority of their activities and was incredibly proud of their accomplishments. Those who cherish Mel's memory include his wife, Marlys; daughter and son-in-law, Michelle and Michael Kneale of Grand Island, and son, Martin Sems of Lincoln; daughter-in-law, Amy Cassner of Lincoln; three grandchildren,

Zachary Kneale, Abbey Kneale, and Jada Sems; and brother, Roland "Bud" Sems of Glendale, AZ.

Other survivors include sisters-in-law Judy Hiser of Lake Elsinore, CA and Jan (Dave) Blair of Napa, CA; brother-in-law, Dan (Rosanne) Christensen of Wolbach; sisters-in-law Cindy (Pete) Luth of Lincoln, Sherri (Brent) Karley of Austin, TX, and Alice Sems of Tuscola, TX; and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Mel was preceded in death by his grandparents; parents; brother, Raymond Sems; grandson, Jacob Alexander Kneale; parents-in-law, Ray and Rhoda Christensen; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Lana and Burel Doll; sister-in-law, Carol Sems; and brothers-in-law, Bob Blair and Rick Hiser.

Memorials are suggested to the family to be designated at a later date. Online remembrances may be left at www.giallfaiths.com.

Previous Events

Gathering of friends and family

JUN **24**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

All Faiths Funeral Home
2929 S Locust St
Grand Island, NE 68801
(308) 398-2929
allfaiths@giallfaiths.com
<https://www.giallfaiths.com/>

Celebration of Life Service

JUN **25**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Messiah Lutheran Church
7th and Locust St.
Grand Island, NE 68801

Tribute Wall



“ *Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems*

October 08, 2023 at 11:02 PM



“ *When Cecil and I had opportunity to travel through Grand Island, we always enjoyed our visits with Mel and you, Marlys. He was a great conversationalist.*

Lola Williams - June 28, 2022 at 12:55 AM



“ *So sorry to hear of Mel's passing. Prayers for the family. Fred and Stephanie Hongsermeier*

Steph Hongsermeier - June 25, 2022 at 11:33 AM



“ *One of the Nicest Gentlemen I ever met!!!*

Gene Critel - June 23, 2022 at 11:52 AM



“ *He taught me so much as a young mold maker. we had great talk when we car pooled to VM Tool. Wish I had stayed in touch. god bless a great man. Thanks for teaching me.*

Keith Kudera - June 23, 2022 at 06:18 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems.*



June 23, 2022 at 12:01 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems.*



June 22, 2022 at 11:55 PM



“ *Mel taught me to serve my country Honorably. To enjoy the outdoors and to respect my elders. He was a noble and honorable man. I grew up under his guiding hand. Could ask for no finer guide. I will miss him. Looking forward ton hunting the fields in God's country. OOOH-RAH Sgt. Sems. God speed cuz.*

Richard Semm - June 22, 2022 at 03:31 PM



“ *I was so sad to see of Mel's passing. What an incredible and talented gentleman. I have been blessed with some of the wooden items he made for Mom (Dee Battles) and were very cherished by Mom. Please know our thoughts and prayers are with you. Sincerely - Danita and John*

Danita S. Alderton - June 22, 2022 at 12:12 PM

JL

“ Marlys, So sorry to read about your loss. The story of Mel’s life with you shows what marvelous things have happened since our confirmation so many years ago. May God continue to bless you and your family. Jerry Lorenzen

Jerry Lorenzen - June 22, 2022 at 11:14 AM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems.



June 22, 2022 at 12:16 AM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Melvin Dean "Mel" Sems.



June 21, 2022 at 08:59 PM

RB

“ We grew to know Mel through schooling in Grand Island. These recent years we became reacquainted at the Class of 1960 monthly coffees at Tommy’s. He was an asset to the conversations and I loved his small carved birds. We last saw Mel in the doctors office as he entered hospice. We hope your family enjoyed some good time these last several months and we will celebrate Mel’s peace. He was a good guy.
Rogene(Rembolt) and Gordon Bainbridge

Rogene Bainbridge - June 21, 2022 at 03:03 PM

RB

“ *God’s blessings to all of you
You will be in my thoughts and prayers
May God give you comfort and may you
always treasure the memories you made with
your loved one*♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥
*Love,
Renee Bornemeier*



Renee Bornemeier - June 21, 2022 at 04:17 AM