



Jimmy Earl Griffith

May 10, 1929 - May 5, 2026

Jimmy Earl Griffith, a lifelong resident of Manson, passed away May 5, 2026 - just five days shy of his 97th birthday. Born in Manson on May 10, 1929, to Elgin and Anna (Hickethier) Griffith, Jim lived a life deeply rooted in family, hard work, and the outdoors he loved so dearly.

Jim attended Manson Schools from first grade through graduation in 1947. During his school years, he was active in athletics, participating in football, basketball, and baseball. Basketball was his greatest passion, and in his senior year he earned First Team honors in both the All-Chelan County Schools Round Robin and the B-School Tri-County League. He continued playing basketball while attending Central Washington College on the YMCA team, and then on the ships team while in the Navy.

Jim graduated from Central Washington College with a degree in Education. Following college, he joined the U.S. Navy and attended naval schools in Oklahoma City and Lakehurst, New Jersey, where he trained as an aerographer. He proudly served aboard an icebreaker in the North Atlantic, making several trips to the Arctic. Their missions included supplying remote weather stations, guiding merchant ships through icy waters to military bases, and participating in occasional rescue missions. Jim often spoke fondly of his years in the service and the adventures they brought.

In 1954, Jim met the love of his life and lifelong best friend, Ruth Arnsberg, in Wenatchee. While driving through town with his cousin, they noticed Ruth and her friend walking along the sidewalk before heading into a corner diner. On a whim, they stopped the car and went inside to introduce themselves. What began over a simple cup of coffee soon blossomed into a two-year courtship, and in 1956, Jim and Ruth were married.

Together, they built a beautiful life centered on love, laughter, hard work, and devotion to family. Through the years, they shared countless memories and were blessed with three children: Patricia (Patty), Earl, and Matthew.

Though Jim enjoyed teaching, farming and working outdoors were truly in his DNA. Alongside his brothers, Willis and Evan, he operated Griffith Brothers Orchard in Manson for many decades before eventually passing the family business on to the next generation.

After retirement, Jim and Ruth spent much of their summers in Stehekin at their cabin, where the peaceful lifestyle and close friendships they formed brought them great joy.

Jim shared his deep love of nature and the outdoors with his family. Countless memories were made at their uplake family getaway Meadow Creek Lodge on Lake Chelan, and later at the family cabin in Stehekin.

Winters were filled with skiing and snowmobiling, while summers brought fishing trips on Lake Chelan, the Stehekin River, and alpine lakes throughout the North Cascades, along with hikes to remote mountain destinations.

One of Jim's favorite hobbies was crafting wooden birdhouse lamps. He lovingly shared many of these handmade creations with family and friends over the years. Those unique lamps will continue to illuminate both homes

and memories for all who were fortunate enough to receive one.

Jim embraced life fully and treasured the people closest to him - especially Ruth, his beloved wife of 63 years; his inspiring parents; his brothers; his children; grandchildren; extended family; and dear friends.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Elgin and Anna; his wife, Ruth; his brothers, Willis and Evan; his youngest son, Matthew; and his daughter, Patty.

He is survived by his son Earl and wife Heidi of Manson; daughter-in-law Annette of Ellensburg; grandchildren Devon, Derek, Katelyn, Samantha, Zach, Alyssa, and Joshua, along with many cherished extended family members and friends.

A celebration of Jim's life will be held at the Fraternal Cemetery in Chelan , Friday July 10th at 11:00 am.

Upcoming Events

Celebration of Life - Graveside

JUL **10**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (PT)

Chelan Fraternal Cemetery
815 N. Bradley St.
Chelan, WA 98816