



## James Eli Smith

March 31, 1920 - August 23, 2007

James Eli Smith, 87, of Keystone died at 10:20 a.m. on Thursday, August 23, 2007, at Swiss Village in Berne. He was a lifelong farmer, first in Hamilton County, and later in Wells County to which he moved in 1952.

He was born in Westfield, Hamilton County, on March 31, 1920, a son of William N. and Sybil A. (Inman) Smith. He was married in Hamilton County on March 14, 1942 to Amanda (Sumner) Smith, who preceded him in death on May 17, 2001. He is survived by his children, Stephen F. Smith of Darlington, James D. (Cassy) Smith of Poneto, Joseph A. (Marita) Smith of Monticello, Mark S. (Patty) Smith of Paulding, OH, and William P. (Stephanie) Smith of Keystone, along with 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his siblings, Betty Frances Smith of Newburg, OR, Jean Allen (Sue) Smith of Tipton, his step-sister Mary Fields of Noblesville, and his step-brother Wilson (Bette) Fields of Somers Pointe, NJ.

He was preceded in death by his sisters, Mary Joan Burton, Emma Carolynne Rickel, and his step-sister Emily Fields, and a brother, sister, and grandson in infancy.

Calling is from 2 to 6 p.m. on Saturday and from 1 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. on Sunday at the Thoma/Rich, Hewitt & Chaney Funeral Home. Services will be at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday at the funeral home, with Minister Marita Smith officiating. Burial will take place in Alberson Cemetery in Adams County.

Memorials may be made to the Swiss Village-Samaritans Endowment or to Family Hospice of Northeast Indiana.

Jim farmed with his father until he married. He farmed in Hamilton County ten years where he set township crop production and county milk production records. Responding to the invitation of a good friend, Earl Powell, he considered Wells County and moved with his wife and two sons to a farm he bought in Nottingham Township in February 1952, after which three more sons were born. He continued in dairy farming, producing a Gold Medal Dam recognized by the Holstein-Friesian Association of America, a national organization which he joined as a life member in 1948.

He was involved in local, county, district, and state dairy associations having been a director at the state level from District IV. He was awarded the Mark Mansfield Memorial Indiana District IV Holstein Breeder of the Year traveling trophy. He was the Wells County SWCD Conservation Farmer of the Year in 1978 and he received the Goodyear Conservation Farmer Award in 1979.

He was a member of the Indiana Historical Society for several years.

He was a birthright Quaker, but, he made a public profession of faith at Petroleum E.U.B. Church which he joined and then became a Sunday school teacher and eventually was named chairman of the building committee for the 1964 addition. He later moved his membership to Grace Bible Church of Berne, IN., and became involved with the missionary committee only to return in a few years to Petroleum United Methodist Church where he continued his involvement with missionary work and a tape ministry. In his last years he attended Nottingham Community Church thus returning to the Quaker faith of his youth.

In his retirement, he enjoyed gardening and growing flowers and providing persimmons, pawpaws and tomatoes to neighbors and friends in the Petroleum area.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG **25**. 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home  
308 West Washington Street  
Bluffton, IN 46714  
(260) 824-3850  
[info@thomarich.com](mailto:info@thomarich.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *James Eli Smith*

September 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *To: Dan Smith*

*My sincerest sympathy in the passing of your father. He died five months and one week after Ron passed away. We enjoyed your friendship in the short time that Ron and your father were roommates at Swiss Village.*

*Blessings*

*Fern Kaehr*

*Berne, IN##imported-begin##Fern Kaehr##imported-end##*

August 25, 2007 at 10:11 PM



“ *Dear Family of Jim Smith, We have all of you in our thoughts and prayers. I grew up knowing your folks I was Lori Becher(Norman & Arlene's daughter) I always enjoyed your Mother so much and your Father has well. We are in the Holstein dairy buisness here at Berne. We also purchased a semen tank from your Father several years ago. Thinking of You, Curt, Lori, Keith & Kyle Sprunger##imported-begin##Curt and Lori Sprunger##imported-end##*

August 25, 2007 at 07:32 PM



“ To the Smith Children,  
We are so sorry to learn of your fathers death. We will always  
remember your parents and some of the older children when we  
lived in Petroleum and George run the Shell Station. Your friends,  
George & Mildred Risser##imported-begin##George & Mildred  
Risser##imported-end##

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August 24, 2007 at 06:43 PM