



**Albert
Wessel**
Army

Albert Wessel

Apr 23, 1924 - Apr 6, 2020

BIRTHPLACE: Baileyville, Kansas

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army, 158th Division of the 8th Army in
the Philippines

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: May 5, 1944 - May 11, 1946

BIOGRAPHY

Albert "Bert" A. Wessel was born 4.5 miles north of Baileyville, at home, on April 23, 1924. He was the eighth of thirteen children born to August and Elizabeth (Osterhaus) Wessel. He lived there and worked on the family farm until May 5, 1944, when he left to serve his country during WWII. Bert served as a rifleman and truck driver in the 158th Division of the 8th Army in the Philippines. While stationed there, the US dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. After the war's end he was sent to Ashikaga, Japan where he served as an MP. On May 11, 1946, he received an honorable discharge and returned home. On August 21, 1946, he married Ethel Barnes, whom he met at a dance and played ball with. They were the parents of two sons: James "Jim" (Marcia) of Blue Rapids and Larry (Arlene) of Frankfort. Ethel preceded him in death in April of 1991. Later, he married Bertha "Jane" Harden on May 21, 1994. Jane preceded him in death in October of 2014. When Bert began farming as a young man, he farmed 240 acres with horses and worked for several area farmers and as a mechanic. Later, Bert and Ethel bought Bronaugh Oil and it became Bert's Service, which they operated for fifteen years. He then became a Rural Mail Carrier for the Frankfort Post Office and retired after twenty years. Bert moved to Frankfort in 1955 and lived in the same home until a few days before his death. He was a member of Annunciation Catholic Church in Frankfort, the Leo McMimminy Post 181 of the American Legion for 64 years, the VFW and the Good Sam's Camping Club. His hobbies were fishing, camping, going to farm auctions, fixing up older tractors, watching baseball on TV, and picking up walnuts to crack and give away. He enjoyed his family most of all, especially his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He loved to watch them playing ball, or just playing in the yard, and could be seen in a lawn chair watching the local games. He always kept a bag of cookies by his recliner, just in case any neighbor kids or the grandkids happened to stop by. He made sure to get together with his siblings at least once a month to play cards or eat lunch. Bert loved being outside and would help Larry farm when he could. He used to farm several small fields around Frankfort. He liked to "country cruise" and always seemed to know a shortcut. He was an avid bowler and was a member of the American Bowling Congress in 1985. In May of 2016, he and his son Jim went on the Kansas Honor Flight to Washington, DC as an honored veteran of WWII.