

# WAYNE 'UNDERTAKER' ANDERSON

## REST IN PEACE

### JUNE 27, 1944 ~ MAY 16, 2014

We've known Undertaker for some 20 years. His given name was Wayne Christian Anderson. He passed away at his home in Apache Junction, Arizona, on May 16, 2014 from advanced cancer. He was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, on June 27, 1944.

Wayne is survived by his daughter, Dana Lynn Smith, three grandchildren (Skylar, Cassie, and Chris), his two older brothers (Grant and Alan Anderson), many cousins, and his good friends in Arizona.

His trike was unmistakable and he was proud of that fact. Notable & memorable was the trailer he pulled ~ made from a genuine casket, with his own modifications of course. He rode with the Brothers of the Third Wheel for a while, but by nature he was an independent soul.

He was sober the entire time we knew him; admitting to us numerous times that he was not a person we would have wanted to know back in his drinking days. He was determined to maintain his sobriety, and tested himself ~ continuously and successfully. He drew people to him who were in need of recovery ~ both as a test for himself and to be an inspiration to them that there was another choice.

The person we knew had a good heart. Our observation might come as a surprise to some of those from his past who may read this. He was gruff and you had to look past his rough manner to see it. But it was there.

Through this loss, we met Wayne's brother Grant. He knew him probably better than anyone. He chose to share some personal thoughts and remembrances about his brother here. So we will turn this over to him now.

With Love & Respect ~  
Bruce & Betsy

#### Wayne Anderson: Some memories from his older brother Grant

Wayne grew up with two older brothers, Alan and me. Wayne was always full of mischief. He would often knock down our blocks and erector-set constructions, and Alan and I would wrestle him to the floor. Our play was always two against one, where the brother on the outside changed from day to day.

Through very bad luck, phonics was eliminated in our school just before Wayne entered first grade. His teacher was "lost" without phonics and so was my Mom, over countless attempts to bolster his reading at the kitchen table. Partly because he never learned to enjoy books, handsome Wayne chased girls instead.

**Wayne's love of boats.** In high school Wayne had a 12-foot Jersey Garvey. Painted on the bow, port and starboard, was the boat's name, BULL \_\_ IT, a good example of Wayne's sense of humor.

Once Wayne thrilled his 8-year-old cousin, Glenn, by hiding low in the boat while Glenn, apparently all alone in the boat, steered past his parents on the dock. Glenn remembers: "Wayne was always my cool, kind of crazy cousin that I think every kid should have. Role model? Not so much. But things I learned by being around and hearing stories about



him, definitely rounded out my social education."

In one Garvey race, Wayne's 3-horsepower Evinrude was "lapped" by the winner's 5-horsepower Mercury—in a two-lap race. After Wayne finished his first lap and had already lost, he headed towards the pier. But everyone else's boat had broken down. So we all waved him around, he managed the second lap, and proudly picked up his second-place trophy.

**Wayne's patriotism.** When the Viet Nam War broke out, Wayne quit high school to join the Navy. He wanted to fight, but bad luck struck again. He was assigned to a minesweeper out of Norfolk, Virginia—nowhere near Viet Nam. It wasn't what he wanted, at all. In addition, the wooden-hulled minesweeper rolled terribly and kept Wayne seasick all the way to Europe and back.

On one visit, I had a great evening with Wayne in Norfolk—drinking, talking and playing pool the entire night. But after this, he started drinking seri-

out.

In spite of alcohol, Wayne held two jobs after the Navy: baggage handler at Newark airport and Teamster truck driver. But bad luck, again: the Teamsters went out on strike and every driver in Wayne's company was let go.

**Wayne's move back home.** After our Dad passed away, Wayne moved back home to take care of Mom, who had Alzheimer's disease. Mom wanted him there, so she could stay in her home of fifty years—in spite of his alcoholism and several stints in rehab.

**Wayne's second life in Arizona.** After Mom died, Wayne closed up the house in 1994 and moved to Apache Junction with Dana. I believe Wayne moved mainly to escape his NJ drinking buddies. And it worked. New friends in Arizona, plus lots of AA, sobered him up for good.

But Alan and I mostly lost track of Wayne when he moved to Arizona. We wrote and phoned only a couple times each year. My wife Betsy and I got to visit him and Dana only once.

**Wayne's generosity.** In Apache Junction, Wayne used the tiniest hack saw and file to intricately cut out half dollars around their main design and lettering. He would sell some of these at flea markets and would give others as Christmas presents—a pin and necklace for Betsy and several belt buckles for me.

Another Christmas, Wayne sent me Mom's photo albums, which he had brought from New Jersey. He said I could take better care of them than he could. I still treasure those, of course.

Another time, Betsy asked Wayne the make/model of my Grandma's mantel clock—so she could buy me one like it for my 50th birthday. Instead, Wayne actually sent Grandma's clock to me for my birthday. I had grown up loving that clock's Westminster chimes.

We celebrate Wayne's life of challenges resolved and the joys of his creativity.

Rest In Peace—our brother, father, grandfather, cousin, friend, and buddy.

And finally, thank you to everyone in Arizona for supporting my brother's escape from alcohol and for your friendships with Wayne.

Grant Anderson



ously. Finally, after more than a dozen "Captain's masts" for bringing alcohol onto the ship, Wayne's Navy enlistment was up and he returned home... an official alcoholic. Later, a lawyer in Arizona would use his Navy discipline and medical records to get him a disability pension from the Veterans' Administration.

**Wayne's married life.** After some roaming around the country (Idaho, California, Florida), Wayne married his first wife, Cindy, and had a son, Sean. But when Cindy divorced him, she and Sean vanished completely from his life... very sad for Wayne.

Then he married Dianne and had a daughter, Dana. Wayne and Dana had a very difficult relationship, especially after his second divorce. Wayne was often in a stupor when he was in charge of 10-year-old Dana. Alan sometimes had to go around the neighborhood to find Dana while Wayne was passed