



Clarence D. Johnston

November 10, 2023

Clarence D. Johnston, 98, passed peacefully on November 10, 2023, surrounded by his family. Clarence was the first child born in May 1925 to Eva (nee: Doughten) and James Albert Johnston. Clarence lived nearly all of his entire 98 years on farms on Game Creek Road in Carneys Point, first at the family homestead and later at the neighboring farm he purchased with his wife, Thelma, across the creek.

Clarence was known as a friendly, helpful and charismatic individual who would help anyone. He was a proud 1943 graduate of Regional High (ReHi) of Penns Grove and served as class president. Clarence's leadership continued throughout his life in nearly all ventures he undertook.

Clarence was a long-term employee of the DuPont Corporation and worked at the Repauno (Gibbstown), Plant I (Carneys Point) and Chambers Works facilities throughout his tenure with the company as a pipefitter and instrument mechanic. Clarence would frequently recount his days at Gibbstown as the best place he had ever worked. There he made many friendships.

Never one to be idle for very long, Clarence remained busy throughout his life farming his home property with the help of his wife Thelma, sons James, John and Bruce, and grandchildren. Clarence was proud to be one of the first farmers in Salem County to utilize irrigation and of course, set up the entire system himself. Never a stranger to a challenge, Clarence built all of the buildings on his farm himself with the help of others and there was very little on the farm his hands did not touch. He and his wife returned abandoned

fields to fertile, farmable ground. Throughout the years they grew peaches, asparagus, tomatoes, peppers, squash, pumpkins, soybeans, wheat, barley, rye and corn. Clarence enjoyed telling the tales of the vehicles he used throughout the years and how many baskets, bales or bins each vehicle could hold. As a child, he enjoyed trips to Florida with his grandfather Clarence Doughten and Uncle Doc, to purchase oranges, tangerines and grapefruit to be sold in Penns Grove during the winter months. Clarence was a skilled mechanic and built and rebuilt many of the tractors, vehicles and equipment on the farm through the years.

A man of great faith, Clarence was an active member of the congregations of Pedricktown First Baptist Church and Park Bible Baptist Church. He taught Sunday School and enjoyed spreading the gospel through the example of his life. Clarence assisted with the founding of the Salem County Chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Farmers. He served as the organization's first president and remained an active member throughout his life. With the Fellowship, Clarence made 18 mission trips to Mexico. He regularly recounted these trips and the wonderful friendships he made. Clarence also enjoyed travelling with his wife Thelma following his retirement from DuPont when his active farming permitted. He also enjoyed snowmobiling, riding his three wheeler and quad and his prized Grasshopper mower.

Clarence always enjoyed farming, especially operating his combine for harvest. Despite suffering a disabling medical event at the age of 86, Clarence was undeterred, and his spirit never waned. He continued to lead an active lifestyle up until his death, regularly mowing grass on his property and taking trips in the car.

Clarence lived independently and alone in the home he built until his death aided by regular visits and support from his family and his dear friends Betty Rodriguez, Sally Hitchner and Barbara Essington. He continued to drive until a few weeks before his death and enjoyed touring the county and its farmland. Clarence was predeceased by his parents, Eva and James Johnston, siblings James and Arthur (Elizabeth nee Slocum), wife of 75 years Thelma (nee

Smith) and son Bruce. Clarence leaves to cherish his memory and carry on his determined spirit his family James (Gloria, nee: Welch), John (Lynne, nee: Merrill), Sandy (nee: Permenter), grandchildren Thomas Still (Tara, nee: Taylor), James Michael, Kelly, Alecia Grova (Vincent), Kari Kille (Patrick), Benjamin (Janice, nee: Arsenault), and Brett, as well as 9 adored great-grandchildren Cohen, Claire, Brook, Raegan, Owen, Maddix, Rory, Alexander and Madeline.

Funeral services will be held on Monday, November 20, 2023, at Park Bible Baptist Church, 95 Sparks Avenue, Pennsville, NJ. Friends may visit with the family at Park Bible from 9:30am to 11:00am. Funeral service at Park Bible beginning at 11:00am. Burial at Lawnside Cemetery in Woodstown, NJ following the funeral service.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests consideration of donations to the following organizations:

Fellowship of Christian Farmers International – Salem County chapter, www.fcfi.org, c/o Kirk Hemple, 44 DuBois Road, Salem, NJ 08079

Meals on Wheels of Salem County, www.scmealsonwheels.org, P.O. Box 888, Elmer, NJ 08318

Cemetery Details

Lawnside Cemetery

Rt. 40
Woodstown, NJ 08098

Previous Events

Viewing

NOV **20**. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Park Bible
95 Sparks Ave.
Pennsville, NJ 08070

Service

NOV **20**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Park Bible
95 Sparks Ave.
Pennsville, NJ 08070

Tribute Wall

AM

“ Sure going to miss "Mr. J". I only became his neighbor and friend in 2007. OH! what a great role model for me, even as a man in his 50s. He was a great resource of knowledge and history. I was happy to be there on their 70th Anniversary, his 97th birthday picnic, but I especially enjoyed visits when I would sit on the piano bench and listen to stories of his life experiences. Places he had been, places he had worked, challenges he had faced, stories of his father and grandfather. I was honored to be on his emergency call list, and help him whenever I could. I am happy I called to chat just a few days prior. He was doing good that day, and told me everything that was going on. Clarence will always be remembered by me in a special way.

ANDY MERENDINO - November 20, 2023 at 06:50 AM

TP

“ My dad, Milton T. Parker, worked with Mr. Johnston at Dupont in Gibbstown. In my early teenage years, my dad and I would often go rabbit hunting on Mr. Johnston's farm. I hadn't met Mr. Johnston, but my dad always spoke very highly of him. He had even graciously given my dad two beagles.

Some time later, at the age of 63, my dad was diagnosed with cancer. Within two years he had passed away, but he received Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior on his death bed. I always knew that Mr. Johnston was an influential part of that process.

Very recently, through a conversation with my friend John DiGregorio about rabbit hunting, I had discovered that Mr. Johnston also had a tremendous impact on his life. John arranged a time when I could meet Mr. Johnston face to face for the first time and share with him the influence that he had on my dad's life.

Praise God, it was an amazing time together that I will always remember.

Tim Parker - November 16, 2023 at 03:01 PM

EL

“ I worked with Clarence at Dupont Chambers Works. He was an excellent mechanic and a pleasure to work with. So sorry to hear of his passing. My condolences to his family. Ernest Little

Ernest E Little - November 14, 2023 at 05:14 PM

TJ

“ Clarence and Thelma were two very special people. They both had such high character and their love for Jesus was evident in the way they served others. When I was pastor at Park Bible, even after Clarence's hip problem made it so that he could not stand up straight, he and Bruce would come to the church every week to mow the lawn. Clarence would hobble over and climb up on the mower and joyfully serve the people of the church. He didn't let his own challenges keep him from doing what he believed was right. And, he never complained about it. My sympathies to all of the Johnston family. Clarence was one of the greatest men I ever knew.

Taylor Jackson - November 14, 2023 at 08:51 AM

CM

“ Carol Monks lit a candle in memory of Clarence Johnston



Carol Molinari Monks - November 13, 2023 at 10:04 PM

DK

“ I always enjoyed chatting with Mr. and Mrs. Johnston at Park Bible. He will certainly be missed. Loved hearing about his many mission trips. He most definitely was a busy man! Always a man of faith, Mr. Johnston's kindness and witness for Christ will be missed. May God bless his family, Darlene Kowal

Darlene Kowal - November 13, 2023 at 07:14 PM

HM

“ I met Mr. Johnston after meeting his wife, Thelma who was a teller at the bank in Pedricktown. A finer gentleman you could not find. Always a kind, soft spoken word. Enjoyed the time we went to Southern Gospel concerts in Lancaster with other friends. Celebrated his 97 and told us of the farm, tractors purchased etc. Now he is in the arms of his loving Savior. Our prayers go out to all the family especially his granddaughter Kari and her Pizza Fridays. What a loss. Peace be with each of you. Love to all. Ruthann and Harry Moore

Harry Moore - November 13, 2023 at 05:11 PM

FJ

“ I am so sorry to hear of Uncle Clarence's passing. He was a good man, a family man, a Christian man, and a very hard worker. He always had a smile for everyone. I looked forward to seeing photos of him with Kari and his great grand children on Pizza Fridays! May God wrap His arms around his family and give you all peace. May the memories sustain you.
Love, Faith Johnston

Faith Johnston - November 13, 2023 at 04:31 PM

BE

Clarence and Thelma were always thinking of others. If they heard that either my husband or I was in the hospital or sick they would call or send a card to express concern. In recent years after our spouses passed away, Clarence enjoyed taking car rides and would often invite me to go along. Since I grew up on a farm in Monmouth County,, we had a lot in common and I learned a lot from him. He knew all the farmers around and was familiar with the crops they grew. Whenever we would see a tractor trailer on the road, he would remark that it was easier for tractor trailers to obtain a Maine license than anywhere else. He knew every road in Salem County and many more beyond! He will be greatly missed!

Barbara Essington - November 22, 2023 at 11:34 AM