



IN LOVING
Memory

Jim D. Kerr

February 24, 1932 - October 16, 2022



Jim D. Kerr, 90, of Highmore, passed away Sunday, October 16, 2022, at the Highmore Health in Highmore, SD.

Jimmie Dale Kerr was born at home in Sedgwick County, Kansas, on February 24, 1932, near Garden Plain, Kansas to Samuel and Lillian (Garnett) Kerr. He attended elementary school with his older brother, Bill and little sister, Eileen, in Garden Plain. He also attended a small country school near his home with a friend, riding their bikes to and from school in 6th grade; those years were filled with fun times. Jimmie started high school in Garden Plain and played football and basketball. Due to a “misunderstanding” of the school’s policy on leaving the school grounds, he and 3 other boys were expelled with just a few weeks left of his sophomore year. Sam Kerr convinced the boys to go back and finish the year, but the next fall Jim refused to go back to that school. So, Sam and Lillian then enrolled Jim and Eileen in school at Viola, Kansas. His class in Viola consisted of a total of 6 boys for those last 2 years and again he was active in football and basketball. Their 6-man football team was undefeated in 1949. Following graduation from Viola High School in 1950, the school superintendent took the 6 young scholars on their Senior Trip. They ventured all the way down and crossed the border into Mexico. As you can imagine, these young farmers from Kansas saw many sights and brought home many tales of their adventure.

His love for the land and farming came from those early years, working the ground, planting the wheat, and waiting for the harvest. Life in Kansas took him on many back roads, following the harvest from Oklahoma to North Dakota. One summer, he accompanied his friend and neighbor, Dick Matzen, to work the harvest near Onida, SD. There he became acquainted with a beautiful young woman with a young son. At the end of the summer, he brought them back to Kansas where Etta would find employment at a bank in Wichita. She and her son began commuting to and sharing an apartment in Wichita with Jim’s sister, Eileen, then on the weekends she would stay at the Kerr farm and help the ladies with the meals. It also gave time for Jim to court her properly under his parent’s roof. The following year, Sam and Lillian Kerr would also

head north with Jim and Etta, and a few of his hired men to start “suitcase farming” near Onida, South Dakota. They would plant spring crops, mostly wheat, in Kansas, then head north and plant wheat in South Dakota, then head back to Kansas to harvest and follow the harvest back to South Dakota, but Kansas was always home. This was a way of life for several years. In July of 1955, Jim said “the next time it rains, Etta and I are getting married”; and so, it was on July 29th they were married in Blunt, South Dakota and the evening ended with Etta being pushed in a wheelbarrow down main street in Onida. Over the next few years, their little family would begin to grow right along with the wheat. Dale Lee, Ramona Kay, Larry Jo, Jackie Lynn and Karla Marie would join their older brother, James Craig Fausett. Jim and Etta were able to buy farm ground near Holabird, South Dakota and split their time between Kansas and South Dakota. In March of 1965, they purchased a farm and settled their family home near Highmore.

Jim was a big, strong man with a generous spirit and a quiet sense of humor. He loved a good story and loved to laugh until he cried. There was never a stranger that he wouldn’t invite to sit down at our dinner table and Etta saw to it that no one went hungry. Jim worked hard on the farm with his crops and livestock, but mostly he worked to bring in the harvest each year. Over the years, Jim and Sam Kerr and their crew of hired men would grow; sometimes there would be 10-15 men in the fields, driving the John Deere combines or the grain trucks. Many young men learned under the instruction. A man of many talents, Jim was also a skilled welder. He joined forces with “Breezy” Peterson to form KP Manufacturing in the 70’s where they welded square tubing to make fence panels, gates, and cattle chutes. Many winter nights were spent with the Peterson’s with the men out in the shop welding panels to sell. There were good years and bad years, easy winters, and long hard winters, but through it all his family was his pride and joy. As harvesting equipment got bigger, less manpower was needed to get the same amount of work done, eventually

working with Larry and a small crew to keep the farm going. Jim was so good with numbers; he could add figures in his head faster than you could punch it out on a calculator.

In his spare time, Jim enjoyed hunting pheasants and deer, occasionally fishing from the shoreline of the gravel pit, and just driving around checking the fields and telling tales with any other old farmer that he met up with on the road. Most Sundays Jim and Larry spent time side by side watching Nascar races – on a couple of occasions, Jim with Larry, Craig, Paul, and Drew were able to attend the races at Kansas Speedway. Jim never really retired from farming; he just took a back seat to let Larry take over. In 2021, he made the choice to move into Highmore Healthcare, but he still asked daily how his harvest was doing.

Survivors include sons: Craig (Peggy) Fausett and Larry Kerr of Highmore, daughters: Jackie (Paul) Carver of Huron and Karla Kerr of Blunt; grandchildren: Amy (Jason) Gebhard, Drew (Becky) Fausett, Emily Kerr, Dani (Chad) Keene, Brittany Kerr, Lauren (Ethan) Marquardt, Tyler (Laura Nabholz) Carver, Matilyn Kerr, Bramm (Desiree) Pickner and Kole Pickner; great-grandchildren: Caleb and Levi Gebhard, Isaac and Elijah Fausett, Benton, Lillian, and Charlotte Keene, and Oliver, Eegee and Nora Marquardt, his sister and brother-in-law Eileen and Don Black of Cheney, KS and numerous nieces and nephews.

On October 16, 2022, at the age of 90 years, Jim was reunited with his sweetheart, Etta and two of their children: Ramona Kay, who died at birth and Dale Lee. Also preceding him in death were his parents and older brother, Bill.

Arrangements Entrusted To
Luz Funeral Home - Highmore, South Dakota
www.familyfuneralhome.net