



## Raymond Joseph Olley

April 2, 1923 - July 4, 2020

It is with great sadness that the family of Raymond J. Olley announce his peaceful passing on July 4, 2020 at the age of 97. Raymond will be lovingly remembered by his surviving children, Catherine(Richard) Stevens, Raymond (Patricia ) Olley, Joanna ( Thomas) Roat, Timothy (Kathleen) Olley, Kevin (Louann) Olley, Regina (George) Schildhouse; his 19 grandchildren; 29 great grandchildren; and other family members and friends and all who even had a passing acquaintance with him. Raymond was preceded in death by his loving and devoted wife, Mary Jane Olley; his daughter, Lorraine Olley Eustice; his brothers, John, Frances ,Fred and Thomas Olley; and his parents John and Mary (Mesch) Olley.

He was born on April 2, 1923 and he was raised in Hillsdale, New Jersey. He graduated high school in 1942 and joined the Navy. After discharge from the Navy he married his sweetheart and settled in Hillsdale, New Jersey, moving to Blue Island, Illinois in 1966. His work history includes Thermo Electric and Western Electric. He retired from Manufacturing Supervision from Federal Signal Corporation in 1988. Then following retirement moved to Bloomington, Indiana in 1988 and finally in 2002 he moved to Manteno. He, along with his four brothers, served in World War II. Ray joined the US Navy in 1942 and served in the Pacific on an LSM311 during wartime. He was a Signalman and Quartermaster. It was just before his ship left the US for the Pacific that he had a chance meeting with a beautiful young girl, Mary Jane, from Blue Island, Illinois. She became his "pen pal" during his time overseas. Then after his honorable discharge from the Navy 2 years later, he was reunited with her. They married in June 1946 at St. Donatus Church in Blue Island, Illinois. He spoke often in later years about the battles that his LSM311 was part of, most significantly the battle at Leyte Gulf, Philippines. Ray had a strong love for the people of the Philippines. He single handedly raised enough money to build a house in Arteche, Philippines. In 2008 he began a dear friendship with JoJo Sayson, who is from the Philippines, and together they shared many stories and good times making memories and plans. He continued to share his stories about his service time and pretty much any and everything before and after. His life was full. He loved the outdoors, hiking, fishing and boating. He loved his canoe that he bought when he was 9 years old. Last year he had the pleasure of paddling the canoe in Manteno Lake. The canoe was refurbished and

launched in a special ceremony honoring Ray by Project Headspace and Timing founder, Eric Petersen. He was an avid runner after heart surgery for many years. He loved playing with his grandchildren and great grandchildren. What he loved to do best was singing. Raymond was a very active member of numerous organizations. He was a lifetime honorable member of the American Legion Post #755 where he served as Chaplain for several years. He was a lifetime member and 4th degree Knight of the Knights of Columbus #11358 where he served as Warden. He was a lifetime member of the LSM/LSMR ASSOCIATION where he served as Chaplain. He is a charter member of the World War II National Museum. He was proud to be interviewed for the Veterans History Project in the Library of Congress American Folklore Center. He was very instrumental in having the Traveling WWII Memorial Pillars of Honor come to our area several years ago. He attended an Honor Flight, along with many other WWII Veterans from the Pacific, on a special occasion debuting the movie, the Pacific. He was an over 20-year volunteer at the Manteno Veterans Home where he was cantor for the weekly Catholic Service and visited with his fellow Veterans. Most recently he was involved in Project Headspace and Timing, headed up by his dear friend, Eric Peterson and was planning events to raise money for homeless veterans. He as a devout member of St. Joseph Church in Manteno and sang in the Choir for many years. His singing career included an audition for America's Got Talent. He sang for many Manteno events as well as for anyone whom he felt needed a song and it was always from his heart. Visitation will be held 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at Clancy-Gernon Funeral Home, Manteno. Funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Manteno. Interment will follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood. Per CDC guidelines, masks and social distancing are recommended. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Project Michelangelo Foundation or the Knights of Columbus or St. Baldrick's Children's Research.

# Cemetery

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## Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery

20953 Hoff Road  
Elwood, IL, 60421

# Events

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**JUL** **Visitation** 04:00PM - 08:00PM

**14**

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Manteno - Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes,  
Inc.

291 N. Main St., Manteno, IL, US, 60950

**JUL** **Funeral Mass** 11:30AM

**15**

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St. Joseph Church

207 S. Main St., Manteno, IL, US, 60950

# Comments

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“ We both always thought of Ray as a great friend. So many nice memories.

**Jerry & Nancy Swinford** - July 14, 2020 at 12:55 PM

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“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



**Paul Eustice** - July 13, 2020 at 05:57 PM

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“ Had the pleasure of knowing Ray & Mary Jane at Oak Ridge; especially enjoyed his singing at Clubhouse events, a very talented & true man of God. I thank the Lord for letting these angels be on earth so long to share their warmth & love. My sincerest sympathy to all the family.

Mike & Marilynne McBride

**Marilynne McBride** - July 12, 2020 at 09:24 AM

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“ 100 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Clancy-Gernon Funeral Homes** - July 11, 2020 at 10:46 AM



“ I was sorry to read of your dad's passing in the Daily Journal today. My sympathies to you Cathy and your family. Paulette Roland

**Paulette Roland** - July 11, 2020 at 04:01 PM

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“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



**Cathy Stevens** - July 11, 2020 at 08:06 AM

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“ Thanks Ray for bring a role model and a great friend. Smooth sea to you my friend and always Anchors Aweigh

**Terrance Lape** - July 10, 2020 at 05:15 PM

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“ Our prayers are sent for the family from us , may he rest in peace, sincerely Barb& Joe McCourt

**Barb&Joe McCourt** - July 10, 2020 at 11:10 AM

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“ We only knew Ray during the last few years of his life but we feel very blessed to have met him. He was a sweet guy and we enjoyed his cheerful demeanor. His concern for veterans was clear and admirable. His love for singing was easily seen. We will keep him and all his family in our prayers. We know that God will bless him. Sincerely,  
Alan and Pam Pickett

**Alan and Pam Pickett** - July 09, 2020 at 05:33 PM

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“ He took the first seat on the bus. I smiled at him and that twinkle in his eyes got me right away....he reminded me of my own dad. I was in charge of the HBO Pacific Chicago group for Honor Flight. There were 63 WWII Veterans from Chicago but Ray took my heart away. We talked together, sat, ate, together. He shared some of his war stories with me and talked about his wonderful Jane. He and the others were honored at the WWII Memorial in Washington DC by Tom Hanks, Stephen Spielberg, Elizabeth Doyle and many other dignitaries. They saw a preview of the documentary. Ray made friends with everyone. He got everyone singing on the bus rides to and fro. We've stayed in touch since. My husband and I visited him in Manteno and had lunch with Ray, Jane and their lovely family. I love this gentle loving man. There aren't many like him. My heart goes out to the Olley family who have lost both parents. All I can say is....those hundreds of wonderful memories will give you peace. Love and Hugs to all of you.

Suzanne Stanits  
Co-Founder, Honor Flight Chicago

Suzanne Stanits - July 09, 2020 at 05:13 PM

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“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



E.W. Peterson - July 09, 2020 at 11:39 AM