



## Arne Ivar Solbak Sr.

April 23, 2025

Arne Ivar Solbak Sr., 93, passed away at his cottage at Landis Homes, Lititz, on April 23, 2025. Born in 1931 in Aalesund, Norway, he was the son of the late Ivar Karl and Agnes Martha (Thorvik) Solbak. Arne was the beloved husband of Mary Martha (Batchelder) Solbak for 58 years.

Growing up in Aalesund, Norway, during World War II significantly impacted Arne's youth, with his town occupied by the Nazis. Despite not always being a perfect son, such as the time he used the family's sugar rations to make caramel, Arne's adventurous spirit led him to start his 52-year career at sea at age 16 as a Mess Boy on a local steamer. At 17, he joined the M/S Bjoernoy as a deckhand, beginning his lifetime of worldwide travels, including ports in the Mediterranean.

In 1950, Arne served in the Royal Norwegian Navy for his 18-month military conscription. After his service, he joined the D/S Maakefjell, traveling from Europe to the Great Lakes, transporting whiskey from Scotland to the USA and clothing and food products back to Europe. In 1955, Arne enrolled in the Aalesund Navigation School, completing his course in 1957 and returning to sea with Bruusgaard Kiosterud (BK) as a Third Officer aboard M/S Henrik, which sailed in Asia.

Arne returned to the Aalesund Navigation School in 1960, passing the

Captain's Exam in 1963, much to his mother's surprise. He continued working for BK as Chief Officer until he was notified about the Captain of M/S Helios becoming ill, requiring him to temporarily fill in. This ship's route was from Hong Kong to Japan and back. Upon returning from Japan, Arne was informed that the captain had passed away, and he was appointed the full-time Captain of M/S Helios. On his first voyage as Captain, he transported seven passengers, including his future wife, Mary Martha Batchelder (Molly), who was serving as a missionary in Hong Kong.

Arne and Molly married in Lancaster, PA, in February 1967. They lived and traveled in the Far East until 1969 when they decided to settle in Aalesund, Norway. While Molly raised their three children in Norway with the support of Arne's family, Arne continued to sail in Asia until 1981. In 1981, Arne transitioned to sailing in the Caribbean, and the family moved to Molly's hometown of Lancaster, PA. Arne navigated every island in the Caribbean and port in Florida during this time. During this period, Arne Jr. attended The University of the Virgin Islands in St. Thomas and discovered a playful side to his father at Tickles Dockside Pub, Arne Sr.'s favorite watering hole in St. Thomas. The Captain cherished sharing a pint (or two) and banter with his local island friends, who were amazed and amused by his ship handling skills of docking large cargo ships, yet struggled to parallel park a car.

Arne Sr. retired from his seafaring life in 1999 and, like many Norwegian Captains, embraced a simpler life as a "farmer" on his cherished acre of "farmland" on Jake Landis Road in Lititz, PA. He found joy in serving his community, washing dishes for the St. James Anchorage program, where he formed lifelong friendships with his Wednesday crew. Arne Sr. also delivered food for Meals on Wheels of Lancaster until he was 90. He was a proud, founding member of the local Sons of Norway Lodge, Bondelandet 612. In his final years, he filled his time feeding the birds, listening to his hometown fotball (soccer) club Aalesund Fotball Klub, cheering on the Eagles, and

making Rye wall hangings. But his greatest joy was watching his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren flourish.

Arne Sr. is survived by his three children: Martha Catherine Bowyer (R. Dwayne) of Hampden-Sydney, VA; Arne Ivar Solbak, Jr. (Nicole) of San Diego, CA; and Johanna Marie Fuste (Jose) of Sarasota, FL; loving grandfather of Collin (Abbey) and Claire Bowyer, Makela and Kjell Solbak, and Alexis and Hunter Fuste; great-grandfather of Bentley and Bella Bowyer; and loving uncle of Anne and Wenche Jensen, Geir Solbak, and Sara and Simon Solbak. He was preceded in death by his siblings John Kjell, Elise Karin, and Idar, and his beloved granddaughter Kirsten Caroline Bowyer.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend The Rite of Christian Burial at St. James Episcopal Church, 119 N. Duke Street, Lancaster, PA, on Friday, June 27, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. with The Reverend David W. Peck officiating. The family will greet friends from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the service. The interment will be held in the Memorial Garden at St. James Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Lancaster Meals on Wheels, 1411 Columbia Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17603, or Landis Homes Caring Fund, 1001 East Oregon Road, Lititz, PA 17543.

# Cemetery Details

## St. James Memorial Garden

Lancaster, PA 17603

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 27. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. James Episcopal Church  
119 N. Duke Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603

## The Rite of Christian Burial

JUN 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. James Episcopal Church  
119 N. Duke Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603

# Tribute Wall

PW

“ Molly, may Arne rest in peace in Heaven. May you have peace knowing he is without pain. Paul and Judy Ware

Paul Ware - June 26, 2025 at 12:19 PM

SF

“ Sara Solbak & familien purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Arne Ivar Solbak Sr..



Sara Solbak & familien - June 14, 2025 at 07:20 AM

VY

“ Michael and I are so sorry to hear of Arne's passing. We have fond memories of the interesting stories about his life told on one of our decks on Jake Landis Road. We would have loved to catch up with the whole family, but we will be in Alaska at the end of June - and then getting on a ship so we will definitely be toasting Arne onboard! Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time. Michael and Virginia Young



Virginia and Michael Young - May 01, 2025 at 07:27 AM

TS

“ So many condolences to the family. Thinking of you in this difficult time. Take care of each other. Hilsen Terje

Terje Akslen Sæter - April 27, 2025 at 01:11 AM