



## Robert C. Folkert

January 8, 1934 - May 10, 2021

Robert Clare Folkert, age 87 of Clare passed away Monday, May 10, 2021 at MidMichigan Medical Center in Midland.

Bob was born the son of the late Glenn and Lois (Rainey) Folkert on January 8, 1934 in Cass City, Michigan. He grew up in Bay City attending grade school and Bay City Central High School. His college years were spent at NYU in Manhattan and Western Michigan College. He went on to open and purchase Mill End Stores.

Bob got a childhood start in retail in his father's Mill End Store in downtown Bay City by opening and managing his own small candy counter. His father gave him a loan to purchase his inventory, teaching him merchandising, pricing, and simple bookkeeping.

While on business in Chicago Bob met a vivacious immigrant girl from Ireland with a resemblance to Elizabeth Taylor, Johanna Ryan. They married, had two girls and moved to Clare in 1963 where he opened his own Mill End Store on the corner of 4th Street and McEwan in the former Davy's Department Store location.

In boyhood his favorite department became hardware, which occupied the basement of the Bay City Store. At that time the store sold only salvage merchandise. It could be menswear, women's wear, household goods of all kinds. Honestly, you never knew what you'd find at Mill End. The tag line was, "World's Most Unusual Store." And it was really.

Bob was an unassuming guy. There are not a lot of photos or fanfare about

his life. Officers would come to the house after local families suffered home fires. He'd open the store after hours and set them up with what he could: boots, coats, jeans, shirts, or whatever would help.

Bob served his country in the US Army. No one knew until it was declassified in the 1990's that he served under Greenbrier, West Virginia, which was the nuclear bunker for the U.S. Congress and staff in times of emergency.

Bob spent his time with his kids hunting, golfing, fishing and camping. He was a lifelong skier and an avid contra and square dancer. He loved Wheatland and attended religiously. His children loved doing it all with him. He hated to cook but enjoyed going to Meijer because they're good retailers. He will be deeply missed by his family.

Bob is survived by his three daughters, Rainey Folkert, Dierdre Folkert, and Jacklyn Folkert and his sister Geraldine Prieskorn of Cass City, Michigan.

Cremation will take place per his wishes. Memorial contributions suggested to the Clare County Animal Shelter or Healthsource of Saginaw. Arrangements were handled by the Clare Chapel of Stephenson-Wyman Funeral Home. On-line guestbook at [www.stephenson-wyman.com](http://www.stephenson-wyman.com)

# Tribute Wall

LS

“ I was an employee of Mr Folkert he was a very nice guy to me. Taught me a lot he will be sadly missed prayers to the girls in there time of sorrow.

Linda m snyder - May 22, 2021 at 08:55 PM

TL

“ Deepest condolences to the Folkert family for the loss of your father and brother. Bay City and Clare have wonderful memories of your families legacy. Tom Larson.

Thomas Larson - May 20, 2021 at 09:40 AM

DS

“ Dee, Jackie, and Rainey, I have so many fond memories working at Mill End. I remember your dad sharing his strategies and knowledge on how to approach a customer, and if he witnessed you doing it in a way that he approved he would make sure to let you know. My thoughts and prayers to all of you.

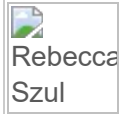
Dawn Swetz - May 19, 2021 at 11:07 AM



Rebecca Szul

“ I'm so sorry, praying for your family. Just know that the Angels have wished him away to eternity where he dance his way through the gates! He was very proud of his girls. Always was very friendly and welcoming everyone that entered his store. He knew most by name. His store served the people well and it was known everywhere you went. I know this will be tough, but he is your Guardian Angle and is always there. ❤️

Rebecca Szul - May 18, 2021 at 03:52 PM



Rebecca Szul

*Angels have whisked not wish.*

Rebecca Szul - May 18, 2021 at 03:54 PM



CJ

*So sorry he will be missed Tom and Connie Johnson*

connie johnson - May 29, 2021 at 09:30 PM



JM

“ Thoughts and prayers for all glad could call him a friend and fellow retailer 🙏

jeff michels - May 18, 2021 at 11:19 AM



DB

“ So sorry for your loss. I worked at Mill End when I was a teen. Mr. Folkert was very kind to me, he'll be always in my thoughts. Blessings to his family.

Diana Blair - May 17, 2021 at 10:06 AM



LI

“ So Sorry for your loss. My thoughts,prayers and sympathy are with all the family  
Linda Chinavare

Lindachinavare - May 15, 2021 at 09:12 AM



JK

“ My thoughts and prayers are with you all... ❤️

Judy Koch-Gulotty - May 14, 2021 at 09:55 AM



“ *Always a kind and friendly person, he was one of a kind!* ”



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**Char Smock** - May 13, 2021 at 09:10 AM