



## James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr.

September 23, 1930 - September 23, 2017

away early Saturday morning, September 23, 2017 at the Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, PA.

Jim was born in Williamsport, PA on September 23, 1930 the son of Harvey A. Ennis Sr. and Bernetta Leshner Ennis. He was a veteran of the Korean War having served in the US Army.

Jim was always a hard worker, working at the Stroehman Bakery in Williamsport from the age of 14. After graduating from Williamsport High School, he attended Lycoming College and Elmira College, garnering his teaching certificate and Master's degrees in education, biology and history. He was James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr., 87, well-known retired Towanda educator and Wysox businessman passed inspired by several teachers whom he had admired as a youth.

His first teaching job, that of a history teacher in Towanda, would define his career as an educator, but Jim's penchant for dabbling in farming, real estate, storage and trucking introduced him to the larger community and helped him to forge long-lasting partnerships and friendships. He was known by many as the Kingfish, a reference to a character on the old Amos & Andy television show known for his nonstop wheeling and dealing.

He bought and sold storage units in the area behind the current Sherwood Groves automobile dealership and opened E&B Lumber Company, a saw mill on Sullivan Street in Wysox. He started Ennis Trucking, which provided interstate household relocation services and delivery of appliances ordered by

local residents through the Sears catalog store with a 26-foot moving van. Fellow teachers, including Frank Hoffman, Ray Hoffman, George Karschner, Charlie Space, and Bill Victory, as well as their sons, often assisted Jim with deliveries.

He bought several apartment houses, starting with a building on Pine Street in Towanda that he still owned. A Chinese restaurant is currently situated on the first floor where Mike Brutzman once ran the Soup & Sandwich Deli.

Jim lived briefly with his wife, Dorothy in an apartment above a dress factory that was situated next to the former Quick & Jennings grocery store on Route 6.

In 1962, shortly after their first son, Jim Ennis, Jr. was born, the family purchased one of the oldest homes in Wysox, and iconic mansion along Route 6 that was built in 1828 and once featured a large carriage step and three hitching posts out front.

The family moved into the first floor of the house, also raising daughter Teresa and second son, Tim, there. Numerous people have rented the second floor of the home over the years, including former Towanda School District Superintendent and athletic coach Don Butler and shop teacher Bill Means.

Jim stated that, when he came to teach in the area, he actually preferred biology over history. "That's what was available at the time," he recalled, noting that he got a break from history for one school year in the late 1970s when he had the opportunity to fill in for a biology teacher on sabbatical.

Mr. Ennis saw two significant changes in his 28 ½ years at the front of the classroom, the building of the current high school and the beginning of middle school in Towanda.

Mr. Ennis saw potential in each new class of students to move up the hill to the high school. Mr. Ennis was known to don a Santa suit at Christmas time, making appearances at holiday programs, visiting grade school students and welcoming children to Christmas parties held by the Towanda Lions Club, of which he served as a member and fundraiser for more than 40 years. He was the honored recipient of the Lions Club Melvin Jones Award.

In the years leading up to his retirement, more of Mr. Ennis's students were children of the students he had taught in the 1960s. Mr. Ennis was humbled by those who took time to reintroduce themselves to him when he and Dorothy were out shopping or dining.

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Confident that he had satisfied his calling as an educator, Mr. Ennis took a decided break from the school upon his retirement, noting that he was one of few former school employees who never returned as a substitute teacher. He viewed his retirement as an opportunity to devote more attention to his other business endeavors, which included his transport business and real estate. In the early 1970s, the Ennis's acquired a half dozen cows and calves from Willis Jennings in Asylum Township and kept them in a small pasture and lean-to barn at the rear of his Wysox property, at the base of a stand of cedar trees that are still there. Large gardens provided the family with plenty of fresh produce, including the ingredients for Jim's favorite Italian dishes.

The cattle herd grew to about 38 head that were moved to the Sherman Barnes farm above Lake Wesauking. Jim sold the cows while he was still teaching. Ennis Trucking is now closed, after being run for some years by Jim, Jr.

Jim credited the "good people" of Wysox for many years of success and happiness in the township. He believed that progress has dramatically changed the pace of life along "The Golden Mile" from a time when Clark Furniture actually stood out as a business among a vibrant neighborhood of residences facing Route 6.

Jim felt honored at the thought that his family's home had acquired a legacy of its own for its Christmas decorations. He and Dorothy related that decorating the large house began modestly when Jim, Jr. and Teresa proposed putting up a Santa Claus and reindeer one year. They credit the vast expansion of the repertoire of lighted figurines to Tim, who seems intent on maintaining the tradition, despite losing part of the collection in the 2011 flood.

Jim's family includes his devoted wife of 58 years, Dorothy Elizabeth Roller Ennis whom he married on November 5, 1958, children, James Ennis Jr. and wife Pam of Sheshequin, Teresa Edsell and husband Tom of Potterville, Timothy Ennis and wife Jenny of Monroeton, grandchildren, Elizabeth, Emmalynn and Esabella Ennis, Missy (Jesse) Finch, Kasie (John) Johnson and Ryan (Amber) Edsell, 7 great grandchildren, his brother, Brother Thomas

Ennis of Ringwood, NJ as well as several nieces, nephews and cousins. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his sister, Helen Ennis and brothers, Harvey Ennis, Joe Ennis and Francis Ennis.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, Sept 27, 2017 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Maryott-Bowen Funeral Home 217 York Ave. Towanda, PA. A private funeral service will be held at the convenience of the family. Burial will be in the Wysox Cemetery with Towanda American Legion Post No. 42 according full military honors. The family suggests that contributions may be directed to the Towanda Lions Club or to a charity or organization of one's choice in memory of James E. Ennis Sr. Memories and condolences may be expressed by visiting [www.bowenfuneralhomes.com](http://www.bowenfuneralhomes.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Wysox Cemetery

Route 187  
Wysox, PA 18854

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 27. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Maryott-Bowen Funeral Home  
217 York Ave.  
Towanda, PA 18848  
(570) 265-2272  
[info@bowenfuneralhomes.com](mailto:info@bowenfuneralhomes.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr.*

October 22, 2023 at 08:10 PM



“ *James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr.*

October 08, 2023 at 10:34 PM



“ *James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr.*

October 06, 2023 at 09:57 AM



“ *James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr.*

October 06, 2023 at 03:29 AM



“ *James E. "Jim" Ennis Sr.*

October 05, 2023 at 02:02 PM



“ *never forget that smile, he was a good man. always liked him. judy tuttle -page so sorry for his family, they loved him and he loved them very much. God bless you all.*

**judy page** - October 24, 2017 at 10:38 AM

EM

“ I remember your Dad well from my high school years in Towanda. He was a big-hearted big guy! My thoughts are with your entire family. Great guy, your Dad...

Eric Mullendore  
Chicago IL

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Eric Mullendore - October 23, 2017 at 09:16 PM

BU

“ Dot and family--We fondly remember Jim as ambitious and fun-loving, and he certainly loved life, as proven by how long and hard he struggled against many challenges to stay alive. Our thought and prayers are with you as you deal with the grief of his death. Sincerely, Ed & Barbara Ulatowski, Kissimmee, FL



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Barbara Ulatowski - September 27, 2017 at 06:21 PM

AN

“ I was so sorry to hear about Mr. Ennis' passing. He was my favorite history teacher. When I moved to THS from NEB in my sophomore year, he took me under his wing and made me feel at home in my new school. I loved his class! He was always supportive and encouraging in everything I did. He had a great sense of humor and made class fun and interesting. I learned a lot from him. He was one of those teachers you never forget because they made a difference in your life. May he rest in peace. God Bless.

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Angie - September 25, 2017 at 07:54 PM