



## Donald Kenneth Simerl

June 5, 1939 - December 20, 2024

Donald Kenneth Simerl, 85, of Mooresville, IN, was sadly diagnosed with cancer just three weeks prior and passed peacefully from this life from within the comfort of his own home while surrounded by family at 6:05pm, on Friday, December 20, 2024. Don was born on June 5, 1939, the only child of the late Gerald Wayne and Reatha Mae (Howard) Simerl, of Covington, Indiana.

Don was a 1957 graduate of Covington High School, where he may be remembered from orchestrating and DJ'ing the local sock hops. Don's life was characterized by a deep passion for aviation and auto mechanics. He began working on cars during high school and transitioned to aviation after graduation. He continued his education at Purdue University, where he studied at the School of Aviation and Transportation Technology. Don earned his Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) license and bravely drafted into the services, where he actively served in the United States Army as a helicopter mechanic from 1962 to 1964 at Fort Benning, Georgia. During his Army service, he contributed to the development of the Huey helicopter's air mobility concept, which played a significant role in the Vietnam War and subsequent conflicts. Don's love for aviation included other military aircraft, especially the P-51 Mustang, a World War II fighter.

Don hired into Delta airlines straight out of college, and upon returning from his military service, he proudly returned to Delta Air Lines, where he was

employed until his retirement in 1993. Don realized that his lifetime work ethic was not ready for retirement, and he returned to the aviation industry, taking another airline mechanic employment with Express One for another five years, before finally and permanently retiring in 1999.

A founding member of the American Huey 369 Inc organization, Don faithfully advocated and supported the cause. A true Ford and Shelby automotive enthusiast, Don was fond of Mustangs, having purchased, restored, and sold over 30 classic cars over the years. In 2000, he showcased his skills by building a 1965 Factory Five Cobra kit car. Beyond his professional pursuits, Don was an exceptional family provider and a skilled handyman. He married Frances Dee (Miller) Simerl on August 21, 1966; to whom he was blessed to share in the joys of parenting his son, Dan and daughter, Deanna.

Considering his home to be his sanctuary, Don took great pride in maintaining the oasis that he and Dee successfully built outside Mooresville, IN in 1969. In addition to the house and property, Don took immaculate care of his tools, toys, and several vehicles through the years. Don continually dove into home projects like electrical, plumbing, landscaping, painting, etc. Don's sense of humor was great, and he was a man who allowed his kids to be kids, and he had a way of just handling things through his actions rather than with words. Finding himself to be the most comfortable and content while at home, He cherished every minute spent with his family, especially with the five grandchildren and one great-grandchild. While never afraid to tackle substantial projects, for Don it was the simple pleasures such as listening to his favorite oldies on the stereo, lawn mowing, snow blowing, bonding with his cats, putting out food for the animals and birds, and even hand feeding the raccoons that lived behind the house that brought him joy after retirement. Throughout his life, Don held deeply patriotic beliefs in his country and held the utmost respect for all US military branches of service.

Don will be deeply missed by his loving family and many friends. Survivors

include his devoted wife of 58 years, Frances “Dee” (Miller) Simerl of Mooresville; son, Daniel Garrett Simerl (wife, Tammy) of West Bloomfield, Michigan; daughter, Deanna Lynne Rynard (husband, David) of Zionsville; beloved grandchildren, Joshua (wife, Jessica), Amelia, Elizabeth, Katie, and Becca; and one great-granddaughter, Beatrix.

Funeral and cremation arrangements have been entrusted to Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel in Monrovia. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested memorial contributions be made in Don’s memory to the American Huey 369 Inc., 209 S. Broadway St., Peru, IN 46970. Envelopes will be provided by the funeral home during services. Friends and family are invited to celebrate Don’s life on Saturday, January 4, 2025, at Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel in Monrovia, with calling hours from 1:00 PM until the Celebration of Life Memorial Service, which begins promptly at 3:00 PM. Pastor Richard Dickison will officiate, and services will conclude with the presentation of military honors. To share an online condolence, sign the guest registry, or post a favorite story in Don’s virtual tribute, please visit [www.lightmemorial.com](http://www.lightmemorial.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Cremation

585 E. MAIN STREET  
Monrovia, IN 46157  
<http://www.lightmemorial.com>

# Previous Events

## Friends & Family Gathering

JAN 4. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel  
585 East Main Street  
Monrovia, IN 46157  
(317) 996-2101  
<https://www.lightmemorial.com>

## Celebration of Life Memorial Service

JAN 4. 3:00 PM (ET)

Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel  
585 East Main Street  
Monrovia, IN 46157  
(317) 996-2101  
<https://www.lightmemorial.com>

## Military Honors

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JAN 4. 3:30 PM (ET)

Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel  
585 East Main Street  
Monrovia, IN 46157  
(317) 996-2101  
<https://www.lightmemorial.com>

# Tribute Wall

CF

“ I have such kind memories of Don from when I was a little kid hanging around Delta Airlines with my Granddad. Don and his family were such good friends of my family and have always been there for them. Thank you for your kindness and your friendship for so many decades. Christine (Butler) Fletcher

Christine Fletcher - February 02, 2025 at 02:20 PM

 Richard Mills

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Richard Mills - January 04, 2025 at 03:21 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Life Tributes



Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel - January 04, 2025 at 10:31 AM



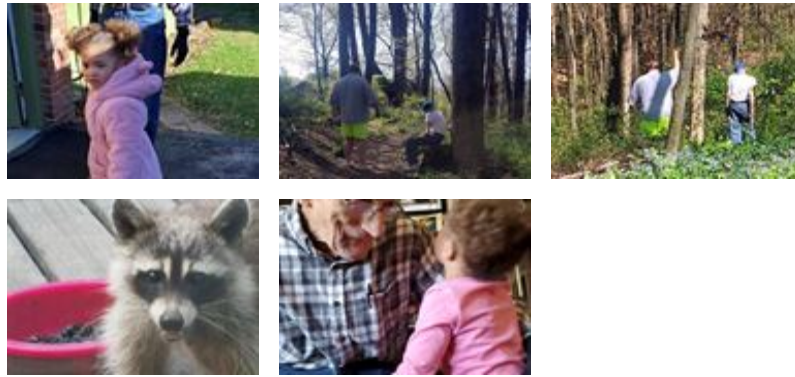
“ Dan, Julane and Jens O’Brien purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.



Dan, Julane and Jens O’Brien - January 04, 2025 at 09:28 AM



“ 5 files added to the album Life Tributes



Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel - January 03, 2025 at 01:33 PM



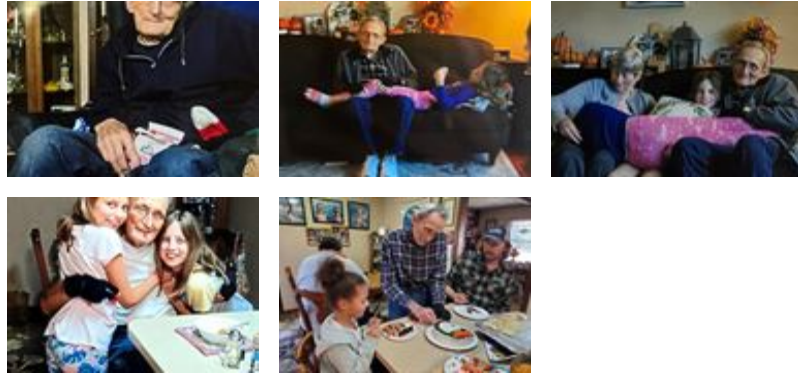
“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.



January 02, 2025 at 12:12 PM



“ 14 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



**Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel** - January 02, 2025 at 12:07 PM



“ *The Autoneum Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Kenneth Simerl.*

**The Autoneum Family** - December 31, 2024 at 08:27 PM



“ *The Autoneum Family purchased the **Strength & Solace Spray** for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.*



**The Autoneum Family** - December 31, 2024 at 08:27 PM



“ *With love, Jaime Heacock and family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.*



With love, Jaime Heacock and family - December 31, 2024 at 06:45 PM



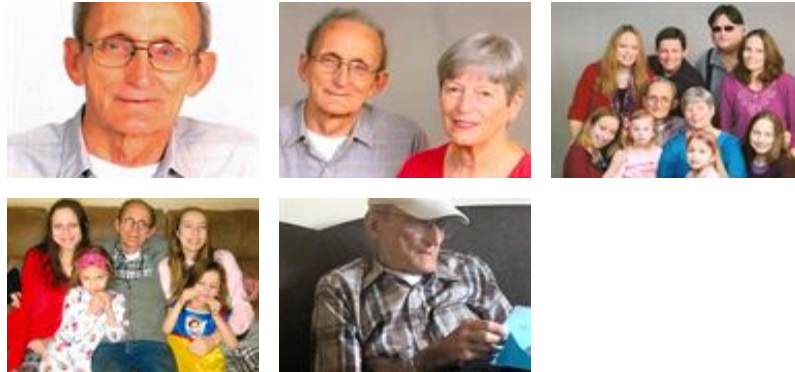
“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.*



December 31, 2024 at 05:18 PM



“ *92 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Light Memorial & Funeral Chapel - December 31, 2024 at 12:43 PM

TF

“ The Smith’s & Fank’s planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Donald Kenneth Simerl.

The Smith’s & Fank’s - December 29, 2024 at 09:47 PM

TF

“ The Smith’s & Fank’s purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.



The Smith’s & Fank’s - December 29, 2024 at 09:47 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Donald Kenneth Simerl.

December 26, 2024 at 10:50 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Donald Kenneth Simerl.



December 26, 2024 at 10:50 PM