



## John A. Johnson

September 13, 1918 - March 22, 2018

PITTSBURG — John A. Johnson, 99, died peacefully in his sleep on Thursday evening, March 22, 2018, at his home in Pittsburg. For the past several years he was lovingly cared for by his great-niece Judy (Johnson) Blanchard, helped by husband Bob, several caring employees of the VA and North Country Home Health & Hospice. He was also frequently visited by family and friends from all around, many of whom left with a smile as they had been quite entertained.

John was born on Sept. 13, 1918, in No. Danville, Vt., the third son of Pittsburg-born Rev. Danno D. Johnson and MaryAnn (Johnson) Johnson. As the son of a minister, he spent the first years of his early life in several communities in NH, Me., and Vt., settling in Contoocook, NH when his father became pastor of the Contoocook Baptist Church. His last year of formal education ended upon his completion of the 8th grade. Due to his "devilish and disruptive" nature he was asked to leave the Hopkinton High School and never return. At 14 he packed his bag and headed to the place he knew and loved-- Pittsburg. Here he went to work in the woods. When work in the woods was slow, he would help out on his Uncle Ed Day's farm or other family farms. Hard work was not a stranger to John and he earned a reputation as a hard and capable worker.

At a very young age, John learned to drive cars, tractors, and the like. He could be found chauffeuring many of his older family members around town and down to see his parents in Contoocook and later Peterborough. It was through these travels he was reacquainted with a former classmate, Evelyn Wells. John and Evelyn were married on Dec. 24, 1939, in Peterborough where they took up residence at the Peterborough house. It was at this time that John started to work for the Boston & Maine Railroad as a trackman, and so began his love of trains.

On Sept. 13, 1943, John was inducted into the Army, training at Camp Claiborne, La., & Camp Shelby, Miss., railroad technical school. He went overseas on April 7, 1944, where he served in the campaigns of northern France, the German Rhineland, and central Europe. He was honorably discharged in Feb., 1946, and returned to Peterborough. In 1947, he and Evelyn bought a home in Jaffrey with 25 acres of land. They proceeded to build a barn and set up a small farm with a few cattle and riding horses, later adding chickens, pigs, and a few sheep.

Adversity seemed to follow John throughout his life. He suffered from stomach ulcers and bladder cancer, and in the early 60s returned home one day to find his parents' home on fire. He rushed in to rescue them both and suffered 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degree burns on his face, arms, and upper body, leading to an extended hospital stay and countless skin grafts. No matter his adversities, John maintained his sense of humor and kept moving forward with a twinkle in his eye.

Through his years in Peterborough and Jaffrey, John worked as a delivery driver for Merrimack Farmers, then as a fuel delivery driver for an oil company in Dublin, where he also trained as a technician, installing and servicing new furnaces and finding himself in great demand servicing old ones. His last job was at the Tack Shop in East Jaffrey. His work ethic never slowed, and he was so well liked he became the Union Steward. A few years after retirement John sold the farm and moved back to the place he still loved, Pittsburg. He did a few renovations and turned the once Back Lake Schoolhouse, built by his grandfather Oliver Johnson, into his retirement home.

John made several trips over the next years. He drove several times to Alaska via the states and Canada, most of the time accompanied by his longtime companion, Gerry.

John was an avid outdoorsman. He loved to hunt, fish, and work on his wood pile.

Through his 95th year, you could find him up on the woodlot, cutting, splitting and hauling his wood down the hill by his 4-wheeler. He kept a large garden for many years, tied flies, and was a fine auto mechanic. He often told the story that he had a 1935 Ford V8 that he had put seven motors in. Through his mid years he had also mentored children of a neighborhood family, the Chamberlains, many of whom, now grown, still kept in contact. John also collected trains over his retirement years, setting up 3 tracks in his living room. Hearing them run, hearing the whistle blow, always brought on a smile.

John was the most recent holder of the Boston Post Cane for the town of Pittsburg.

John is survived by his nephew, Thomas H Johnson Jr, and wife Beverly of Contoocook NH, niece Olive (Johnson) Ryan of Contoocook, nephew Clinton Johnson of Clarksville, NH, great-nieces Sharon (Johnson) Prescott and husband Peter of Contoocook, Judith (Johnson) Blanchard, and husband Bob of Pittsburg, great-nephew Thomas E. Johnson of Warner, NH, great-niece Deborah (Johnson) Heitmeier and husband Ken of Arlington, Tex., and great-nephew Frank C. Johnson of Maine; and several great-great and great-great-great nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his loving wife of 39 years, Evelyn, in 1978, sister Elsie (Johnson) Maki, brother Oliver Johnson, and brother Thomas H. Johnson, Sr., nephew Frank D. Johnson, and great-niece Barbara (Johnson) Ryba.

There are no public calling hours. A graveside interment service with military honors will be held on Saturday, May 26, at 11 a.m. in the Pittsburg Hollow Cemetery on Hill Road.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in his name to the Pittsburg Fire Department,

1684 Main St., Pittsburg, NH, 03592; or to the North Country Home Health & Hospice, 536 Cottage St., Littleton, NH 03561.

Condolences may be offered to the family on-line by going to <http://www.jenkinsnewman.com>.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Jenkins & Newman Funeral Home, Colebrook, NH.

# Cemetery

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## **Pittsburg Hollow Cemetery**

Hill Road

Pittsburg, NH,

# Comments

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John A. Johnson.



May 22, 2018 at 09:05 AM

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“ Dorothy Stebbins lit a candle in memory of John A. Johnson



**Dorothy Stebbins** - April 25, 2018 at 09:31 AM



“ Johnny was a great neighbor. He shared many stories with us at holiday gatherings at the Day's house. We will trully cherish the time we spent with Johnny. Kind, comical, lots of fun; we will miss him dearly. So sorry for your loss.

**Dorothy Stebbins** - April 25, 2018 at 09:36 AM

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“ Judi And John lit a candle in memory of John A. Johnson



**Judi And John** - April 03, 2018 at 02:18 PM

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“ Linda Clogston lit a candle in memory of John A. Johnson



**Linda Clogston** - April 03, 2018 at 11:29 AM

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“ Sorry for your loss. He had a lot of great memories that he shared to us.

**Linda Clogston** - April 03, 2018 at 11:30 AM

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“ My condolences to the family, he was a very special person in my life. I really missed him when I moved down south, love his Sense of humor.

**Gigi Harvey** - April 02, 2018 at 07:48 PM

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“ Audie Porter lit a candle in memory of John A. Johnson



**Audie Porter** - April 02, 2018 at 05:21 PM

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“ I always looked forward to seeing John during my time as a home health nurse. He was a genuine person with a kind heart. We had many laughs, tears, and sharing of stories. He loved his dog. Many loved him. I will miss you on Earth, John, and was very blessed by knowing you!

**Deborah Dimmitt** - March 31, 2018 at 09:49 AM