



Alan B Hughes

April 3, 1933 - February 20, 2025

WHITEFIELD – The cows have come home, the tractor put up in the barn, and his overalls slung over the chair for the last time. Alan B. Hughes, 91, died peacefully at his home in Whitefield, N.H., surrounded by his beloved family, on Thursday, Feb. 20, 2025.

Farmers around New England will fondly remember Alan for his steely Irish blue eyes and the even more Irish “gift of gab.” He knew never to impede on the important time in the milking parlor, but less pressing work would often wait when Alan’s generosity and hilarious, if not slightly embellished, stories pulled into the dooryard.

Alan was the patriarch of the Hughes clan, whose great-grandparents had their start as owners and operators of the Colebrook House in Colebrook, N.H.; later to be a source of many of Alan’s colorful stories and also cherished life-long relationships.

The origins of the family, Thomas and Marion Hartshorn, and their 13 children, who all became active business owners in and around Colebrook, were the basis for a strong family that loved one another as much as they relied on each other. There were chores for Alan and his brothers, Dean, Robert, and Ronald, all mapped out all the way to and from school, oftentimes in the brutal north country cold. Surely, this was the genesis to Alan’s enviable work ethic, but also, busy time that would detract from some of the antics he and his brothers would find for themselves.

Alan was born on April 3, 1933, to Homer and Florence (Blais) Hughes. A 1951 graduate of Colebrook Academy, he married Patricia Covell on June 28, 1953, and had two daughters: Jan, a sharp and dedicated high school librarian and teacher, of South Burlington, Vt., and Rebecca, a fiercely independent and successful wayfarer whose zip codes dot the country. Her dad-inspired personality proves that things really are bigger in her home of Texas. He spent two years serving his country in the U.S. Army and graduated from the University of New Hampshire with bachelor’s degree in agricultural science. That led him to just one of his many loves, love of the land, as he pursued owning and operating a large dairy farm on South Lancaster Road in Lancaster, N.H.

As the government continued to manipulate the price of milk, Alan popped the clutch on his beloved John Deere 520, shifted gears and launched a career with Farm Credit in St. Johnsbury, Vt. He guided his many agricultural friends with expert advice and loans and mortgages on both sides of the Connecticut River valley for 19 years.

On Dec. 1, 1973, he married Catherine Carlisle of Pittsburg, N.H. Over the next 50+ years full of love and laughter, they'd live in St. Johnsbury, Monroe, N.H., Charlotte, Vt., and Whitefield, N.H. They have one son, Seth, a broadcast personality and media producer in Seattle, Wash. Seth looks back fondly on the times with his "Deeda," hunting, fishing, riding tractors and "thrashin' thistles."

Alan's ability to evolve is unmatched; in 1982, Alan's farming passion led to the birth of DMRC, his own dairy management and consulting company, traveling northern New England in an adorable Grumman van, retrofitted with a mobile office. Alan, who couldn't successfully operate a TV remote control, through straight north country grit and determination, overcame his challenges with technology to build a proprietary database on the emerging realm of the personal computer, analyzing feed programs. His techniques made his client friends' milk production flourish.

Alan's business was successful from 1982 to 1994, and at age 61, he saw another opportunity for his family and relocated to the Champlain Valley of Vermont to become a consultant for Feed Commodities of Vergennes, once again guiding even more of his friends. There was barely a farmer in all of the northeast that Alan didn't truly know and love, except for that "one" for whom he'd had too much class to name.

He spent years volunteering for various communities as a firefighter, was a prolific collector of all things green and from Moline, and he loved history, especially that of the world tool of necessity, the axe. He had a passion for baking beans, making fish stew and planting Irish potatoes. Alan's love of the outdoors transcended just the woods, because to him it meant socializing with close friends and family at Whipple Ridge, or Crazy Moon Camp, snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, or just sitting on a stump enjoying a cigar and reflecting on a great life. One of his many gifts was his hands...there wasn't a project in the barn, the yard, the shop, the garage, or the house that Alan couldn't tackle. He took pride in his ability to "MacGyver" a project with, way more often than not, without a sore thumb from a wayward hammer strike and which resulted in positive results, all skills he continued to use late in life. At age 90, he solely designed and built his large "pipe organ bridge," a walking solution for his retirement community, complete with hand-poured concrete footings, for which he received a special commendation from his fellow residents

at The Summit by Morrison. It's a special gift that will be just part of his legacy for decades to come.

Not one for television, no sir, Alan instead chose to study the Wall Street Journal daily and knew more about the world economy than most politicians, or economists for that matter. Alan will always be known by his infectious belly laugh that will reverberate on the minds of all that were gifted to hear it. If you heard just once, you still hear it.

Born on the 3rd of the month, the number that lovingly wove its way through Alan's life: he was a father of three, a grandfather of three, a great-grandfather of three, and a notable run-in with the late WCAX Channel 3 news anchor, Marselius Parsons (those who know, know).

Alan took pride in his children and had fond memories of trips to Washington, D.C., with a toddler under the cherry blossoms, and years later with his son on an "honor flight" tour of the city.

He lovingly guided and cheered his grandchildren, amazing, loving, caring moms, Bethany and Sarah...and Jackson, a keen youth hockey player that really light the lamp. He was charmed by the varied skills of great-grandchildren Claire, Elliott, and Wrenn, who are crafty, sporty, musical, industrious...and there's even a unicycle rider in there.

Alan is survived by his wife, Catherine, son Seth, daughters Jan and Rebecca, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and his brother, Robert. He is predeceased by his brothers, Dean and Ronald, and dozens of cousins.

As wonderful a husband, son, father, grandfather, and brother that Alan was, he was an even better man. He was a rare combination of someone who had a love of life and a firm understanding of what was important, the simplicity of living life with those you love.

There are no public services planned. Alan will be privately interred at an intimate family service at a later date in the summer in the Colebrook Village Cemetery.

Condolences may be offered to the family on-line by going to www.jenkinsnewman.com.

Jenkins and Newman Funeral Home is entrusted with final arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Colebrook Village Cemetery

North Main Street, U.S. Route 3
Colebrook, NH

Tribute Wall

DK

“ I always enjoyed Alan’s stories and his infectious laugh. After Greg’s Celebration of Life Robert and he came to visit me at my log house to thank me. He had some good stories to tell about Greg and the Hughes clan. I have always thought that was so thoughtful of him. He was a nice man who is missed.

Donna A Keazer - March 31, 2025 at 05:27 PM

SG

“ My condolences to Alan’s family.
What a gentle giant, mountain of a man.
I’m so grateful to have had a chance to get to know Alan and Cathy over the last ten years. How he will be missed.
Sharon Gilman (formerly Laggis)

Sharon Gilman - March 30, 2025 at 02:20 PM

FJ

“ Sorry to hear of the loss of Alan.I used to stop by and visit with him when I went fishing in Charlotte. Thank you Jan for keeping us informed about the family.

Frederick Jackson - March 21, 2025 at 09:11 PM

ST

“ Steph lit a candle in memory of Alan B Hughes



Steph - March 19, 2025 at 05:22 PM

ST

“ While waiting patiently for this beautiful and fitting obituary penned by Uncle Alan's only son Seth, I have had the opportunity to pray and reflect on a great man. My Uncle, and recently my neighbor here in Whitefield. Brad and I will miss your grin, your humor, your storytelling and your presence. How lucky we were to share time with you. Please keep Dad and Uncle Dean in line and hold the cows at the gate back from blocking our arrival. We love you and we will look out for Aunt Cathie.
Brad and Stephanie Cross

Steph - March 19, 2025 at 05:19 PM

SH

Thanks for your kind words Steph! Dad will be missed terribly. Jan and Rebecca helped with the obituary too. It was a wonderful tribute from all 3 of his children.

Seth Hughes - March 19, 2025 at 08:45 PM

ST

All 3 of you then deserve the praise for a beautifully written obit that captures the essence of a great man. Much love to you all.

steph - March 19, 2025 at 09:27 PM

DC

I did know Alan and Cathie years ago. What a wonderful obituary

David Chappell - December 21, 2025 at 06:13 PM

ES

“ *Cathy,
I just heard about Alan. I am so sorry for your loss. You two were a very good pair.*

Eric Stohl - March 01, 2025 at 12:39 PM

TF

“ *All our prayers are with you at this difficult time. Alan was one of a kind and I enjoyed his stories of the Hughes clan and the north country, including his time working at the Covell farm. Rest in peace, cousin!
Tom and Jane Frizzell*

Thomas Frizzell - February 25, 2025 at 05:17 PM