



## Thomas Ryan

April 28, 1925 - November 20, 2012

Thomas G. Ryan, 87 of Cedar Falls, Iowa, died Tuesday, November 20, 2012, at Covenant Medical Center in Waterloo.

Thomas was born in Chicago on April 28, 1925, the oldest of the five children of Clinton Ryan and Rose Hansen Ryan. When he was 11, the family moved to Brooklyn, Iowa, his father's hometown. He graduated from Brooklyn High School in 1943 and, like most young men of his cohort, served in the armed forces during World War II, entering the U.S. Army less than four months after high school graduation.

Thomas attended the University of Iowa 1946-1952 and 1955-1959, the last four years as a teaching assistant in the history department.

He married Jane Doyle at Sacred Heart Church in Boone, Iowa, on August 24, 1957. They lived in Iowa City for two years, in Detroit for one year, and in Cedar Falls since 1960. Four of their five children were born in Cedar Falls.

Tom joined the Social Science Department of Iowa State Teacher's College (now the University of Northern Iowa) in 1960, teaching 33 ½ years until his retirement in December 1993. In addition to teaching on campus, he also taught three UNI correspondence study courses from the late 1960's until the early 1990's. These provided early opportunities in distance learning.

For two years (1968-1970) he also served as the first coordinator of UNI's Minority Group Education Program, a precursor of current university efforts to encourage diversity in all parts of the institution.

In the early 1970's, he began to do research and writing in Iowa history, politics and demography. The results were incorporated into his History of Iowa course and publication in scholarly journals, especially Annals of Iowa and dozens of articles published in Iowa newspapers, especially the Des Moines Register and the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier. He also contributed to radio station KUNI commentaries.

He continued this research, writing and publication for many years after his retirement in 1993, and was a familiar figure on the UNI campus, especially in Rod Library.

Retirement also gave him more time for tennis, Scrabble, and travel in the United States and Europe, and for grandchildren who entered his life and Jane's about two years into their retirement.

Preceded in death by his parents, a brother, Jerome, and a sister, Joan Heath.

Survived by his wife, their five children, the childrens' spouses, ten grandchildren and two brothers. The children are Kathleen (William) LaCourse of Catonsville, Maryland, Michael (Maria Young) Ryan and Kevin (Gina) Ryan of Littleton, Colorado, Patricia (Kevin) Kroymann of Austin, Minnesota and Maureen (Deron) Anliker of Overland Park, Kansas.

The grandchildren are Margaret LaCourse, Grace Ryan, Michael, Joseph and Thomas Kroymann, John, Sarah and Daniel Anliker and Emma and Olivia Young.

His brothers James and Rev. Philip Ryan live in Brooklyn, Iowa.

Mass of Christian Burial will be held 11:00 a.m. Saturday at St. Patrick Catholic Church with burial in Greenwood Cemetery, both in Cedar Falls. Military Honors will be conducted by Cedar Falls AMVETS Post 49. Friends may call from 3 to 5:00 p.m. Friday at Richardson Funeral Service where there will be a 5 p.m. Vigil with Rosary to follow. Visitation also for one hour prior to services Saturday at the church.

Memorials may be sent to St. Patrick Catholic Church, and the UNI Foundation.

Condolences may be left at [www.richardsonfuneralservice.com](http://www.richardsonfuneralservice.com).

# Tribute Wall

CA

“ I am a former student of Mr. Ryan's, class of 1954, Sheldon Community High School. I always enjoyed his class and his easy going teaching way. He also enjoyed a lot of meals at my mother's (Ray's Bowl Cafe) before he was married and I enjoyed waiting on him. I'm sure all of you are proud to have called him husband, dad, grampa. Bless all of you as you grieve his loss.  
Coleen Wolbers Ahlersw

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**Coleen Ahlers** - March 29, 2013 at 02:49 PM

LB

“ Jane & family: Tom will be long remembered by many. He had a rare warmth of personality and beauty of character that left a lasting impression upon all who met him. He will be missed by all.

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**Leander & Catherine Brown** - March 29, 2013 at 02:49 PM

SC

“ Thomas Ryan

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**Steve Citta** - March 29, 2013 at 02:49 PM

CT

“ Maureen,

*Thinking of you and your family today and praying you are finding comfort in your wonderful memories of your father.*

*Connie Turnipseed*

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**Connie Turnipseed** - March 29, 2013 at 02:49 PM

RS

“ Judy and I were very sorry to hear about Tom's passing. He was one of my first and very best friends at U.N.I. I will remember him fondly. My condolences to the entire family.

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**Roy SANDSTROM** - March 29, 2013 at 02:49 PM

HO

“ Dear Ryan Family, Although I never had the pleasure to meet Mr. Ryan, I have known Maureen for years and have enjoyed hearing Maureen talk about him. He sounded like a wonderful father. I know he will be missed. Sincerely, Holly O'Keefe (friend of the Anlikers)

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**holly o'keefe** - March 29, 2013 at 02:49 PM

TS

“ So very sorry for your loss. Rejoice and be thankful that you had your Dad for so long.

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**Tim Sulentic** - March 29, 2013 at 02:48 PM

JH

“ So sorry for your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. In sympathy, Jim Hayes and family

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**Jim Hayes** - March 29, 2013 at 02:48 PM

“ To the family and friends of Dr. Thomas Ryan I wanted to send you sympathy as well as a short story about Dr. Ryan as I was a student of his in 1982 or there about.

*Dr. Thomas Ryan - American History Since 1877 is what my paperwork said. I had signed up for the class as part of my gen. ed. requirement..... B..o..r..i..n..g. I had studied history in high school, always loved it but now I needed to take it again to fill some crazy requirement which only took more of my valuable time from the more “important” classes I needed to have to eventually graduate and get a real job.*

*As an incoming freshman all of the really “important” classes I needed were filled by upper classmen. So gen. ed. it is and American History Since 1877 will be for me, right after lunch no less and about 200 students in the class. How could I get anything out of this? This would be a challenge.*

*I made it through class and with a decent grade. Dr. Ryan taught with excitement and spoke about history as if he had been there. I was 19 and to me he appeared old enough to me to have lived a lot of the very history he was teaching. I really enjoyed the class and kept a love of history all these years.*

*Fast forward to 2010. With experience under my belt that only life, a combination of exciting careers and a continuing love for history could prepare me for, I accepted the job of Executive Director for Heartland Acres Agribition Center in Independence. As always is the case the job is more than what it appears and my love of history is a small but significant part of my job.*

*When I heard of Dr. Ryan’s passing I thought he might like to have known that a previous student of his from way back in 1982 now uses those gen. ed. credit hours along with a continuing love of American History, brought out by his teaching, to the best of my ability in a very rewarding career.*

*I've been meaning to pass this on since I first read of Dr. Ryan's passing but life happens and now we're here today. I hope my short story brings more fond memories to the family and friends of Dr. Thomas Ryan – American History Since 1877.*

*Sincerely,*

*Craig Johnson  
Executive Director,  
Heartland Acres Agribition Center*

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**Craig Johnson** - March 29, 2013 at 02:48 PM

SB

“*I first met Mr. Ryan when he came to Sheldon to be the High School Social Studies teacher. He rented a room in the house across the street from where I lived and I happened to be baby sitting there the day he arrived. He was a wonderful teacher and made history interesting for me, which was not an easy task. I also enjoyed going for coffee with him in recent years after I retired from teaching in Reinbeck. He will be deeply missed!*

*Sherris Pierce Brown*

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**Sherris Pierce Brown** - November 24, 2012 at 12:00 AM