



John Michael Cottingham

February 23, 1947 - September 5, 2017

John Michael Cottingham (Mike) 2/23/1947 -- 9/5/2017 John Michael Varie (Cottingham) was born on February 23rd, 1947 in Deadwood South Dakota as the son of Ray Varie and Patricia Jane Schmidt Varie. He was welcomed into the family by two older brothers, Ray and James (Jim), and two older sisters, Dorothy and Patricia (Patsy). Unfortunately, after a divorce the children would lose contact with their father before they were old enough to form more than a handful of memories of him. They lived in California and Oregon before their mother took them back to her hometown of Lead, South Dakota, where she would meet and marry Robert Cottingham who legally adopted the five children from Pats first marriage. The family continued to grow with the birth of two more daughters, Leah and Bobbie. Robert's son from a previous marriage who shared his name was raised by an Aunt and Uncle (Jesse and Vernon Willhoite) in Mitchell, SD, but maintained close ties with the family throughout his lifetime. John was always called Mike by family and friends and he felt fortunate to grow up in Lead during the days when the Homestake Mining Company was active and provided many benefits for the town. His mother worked as a nurse, x-ray technician, and head lab technician at the Homestake Hospital while his stepfather worked as a contract miner and shift boss. Mike graduated from Lead High School in 1966 and continued his vocational training as a machinist. Mike is well known in the Northwest for his expertise related to Harley motorcycles. He built a shop and did mechanic work on them that included almost any type of repair, rebuild, tune-up and

performance work. His work was exceptional and consequently he had a steady stream of repeat business. He had an innate gift for all things mechanical. He spent many years working as a millwright machinist and spent time boating, fishing and riding Harley motorcycles as well as target shooting in his leisure time. He loved Harleys and owned more than a few in his lifetime. Mike will be missed by his brothers and sisters as well as his special fiancée, PJ and his two little dogs Deja and Jaunty. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews,?, cousins, friends and one Uncle, Richard Varie.

Tribute Wall



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

Evergreen Memorial Gardens - July 03, 2025 at 07:49 PM



“ PJ & Family, My sincere condolences to you. I worked with John at Graphic Pkg North Portland for 30 years. He was the Maintenance Foreman/Machinist and was a great guy to work with. I helped John on many projects at Graphic, and learned a lot from him. He was always patient with all of my questions I had for him. He always took the time to explain everything to me. He also pulled some pretty darn good pranks at work now and then!

Jodene Wilhoit, Retired Storeroom Foreman GPI - September 14, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle Mike, you were the coolest dude! We didn't get too spend a lot of time together, but I loved and respected you! May you rest in peace and we meet again someday.

Dana Bieber - September 13, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Rode with John more than a few times. Helped me out so many times. He will missed but remembered, thoughts and prayers go out to Pattyjo and the Cottingham's.

Dave Demers - September 12, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ John was part of our group rides many times. We even rode to Pendicton, B.C. for the Canadian National Hog Rally together. He was typically a quiet man but warm and friendly to those of us that knew him. He was always there for us to lend a helping hand including fixing my motorcycle on very short notice. We have many fun memories shared with John. Unfortunately, we will be out of town on Friday during his memorial. I send my sincere condolences to John's family and friends. He was a wonderful friend.

Dawna Metcalf - September 12, 2017 at 12:00 AM

CL

“ My thoughts and prayers are with all of the Cottingham family. I was so sorry to hear learn of Mike's passing. With sympathy, another neighborhood kid, Carole Krause Lee

Carole Ler - September 12, 2017 at 12:00 AM

MD

“ My heart felt condolences to family and friends and Pattyjo. John and I were frends since 2000.we meet at Graphic Packaging.We like a lot of the same things and became friends.He was a very special person and friend.

Mike Douglas - September 11, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KK

“ We are so sorry to hear of Mikes passing. He was my neighbor growing up in Lead, Sd. My maiden name was Burrington. My husband Kim, was in Oregon with Mike and Dennis Heupel in the early 70's. May he Rest In Peace. Kim and Dorothy Keller

Kim and Dorothy Keller - September 11, 2017 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ We know that Mike's last few years were happy ones with the companionship from PJ and his doggies. He is now healthy and watching from Heaven. We have never seen our sister, PJ, so happy as she was with Mike. We are so glad his family are so supportive and standing by for her.

Jackie and Larry Seacat - September 11, 2017 at 12:00 AM

GC

“ My condolences to Mike and his family. Mike was my high school friend. Sorry I never had the opportunity to get to know you, PJ. I placed a post on the "Lead High School (LHS) Reunion 2016" Facebook group site so our former classmates will know. Prayers for peace and comfort to you.

Gary Callahan - September 10, 2017 at 12:00 AM

KD

“ John was the best neighbor. Again PJ, I am so sorry.

Keith Dahl - September 08, 2017 at 12:00 AM