



Ernest A. Rota

April 19, 1924 - June 16, 2021

Ernest “Ernie” Rota passed away on June 16, 2021 at his home in Napa, only 2 blocks from where he was born on April 19, 1924. His mother Aurelia Varni Rota was a California native raised in Italy and his father, Camillo, was an Italian immigrant. Ernie lived his entire life in Napa, a community he loved dearly. Ernie had two brothers, Roy and Warren who were his life-long friends.

After graduating from Napa High School Ernie started work at a local funeral home. That was short lived as he enlisted in the Army Air Corp serving in World War II. He eventually flew 25 missions over Italy – at 20 years old he was the flight engineer on a B-24 Liberator.

During his flight training he met Eloise Carter at a USO dance in Lincoln, Nebraska. After the war they reconnected and married at St. John’s Catholic Church in Napa on July 14, 1946. Their partnership lasted until Eloise died in 2017. They had two children, Leslie and Robert.

In 1956 Ernie, Eloise and their partner Ed Claffey opened Claffey and Rota Funeral Home on Main St. in Napa. Unfortunately Mr. Claffey died of a massive heart attack during their first year of business. Ernie and Eloise continued working tirelessly to serve the Napa community with their son, Bob, eventually joining them. That legacy continues now with their daughter Leslie and granddaughter Suzanne managing the funeral home.

Ernie was an active member of the Napa community. He was a life-long member of St. John’s Catholic Church, served as a member of the City Council from 1966-1973, and actively participated in the Napa Kiwanis Club for over 60 years. He was also a proud member of the Italian Catholic Federation, Native Sons of the Golden West, American Legion and numerous other organizations.

Ernie was predeceased by his parents, wife Eloise, son Bob and his brothers. He is survived by his daughter Leslie Rota, granddaughters Suzanne Simas and Elizabeth (Eric) Wade, great-granddaughter Henley Wade and numerous nieces and nephews. The family would like to thank our devoted care giver, Maria Diaz.

A Rosary will be recited in his memory at Claffey and Rota Funeral Home, at 7 pm Wednesday June 23rd with visitation from 5-7 pm. The family requests masks be worn at the visitation and rosary. A funeral Mass will be celebrated on Thursday, June 24th at 10

am at St. John's Catholic Church; his burial with military honors will be at Tulocay cemetery following the Mass. A reception will take place at the Napa Elks Club beginning at 12:30 pm. Please consider donations to the Queen of the Valley Hospital Foundation, the Robert "Bob" Rota scholarship at Justin High School, or the charity of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Tulocay Cemetery

411 Coombsville Rd
Napa, CA 94558

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN **23**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Claffey and Rota Funeral Home
1975 Main Street
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 224-5210
services@claffeyandrota.com
<http://www.claffeyandrota.com>

Rosary

JUN **23**. 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM (PT)

Claffey and Rota Funeral Home
1975 Main Street
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 224-5210
services@claffeyandrota.com
<http://www.claffeyandrota.com>

Mass

JUN **24**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (PT)

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
981 Napa St.
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 226-9379
<http://www.stjb1858.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ Ernest A. Rota

September 29, 2022 at 04:54 PM



“ Ernest A. Rota

September 29, 2022 at 02:55 PM



“ Dear Ernie conducted many funeral services for departed friends and my beloved Wife, Susan Hendricks. He always was helpful, kind and comforting. I love and respected Ernie for his gentle manner. My Executor will contact Claffey and Rota when my time comes so I may be buried at Tulocay with my wife. My blessings and sympathy to Ernie's Family.

Terrence "Terry" Hendricks (79)

Terrence "Terry" Hendricks - July 07, 2021 at 11:32 PM



“ Growing up with son Bob, Mr. Rota was such an understanding great man. The underground tunnels in the backyard, the basketball hoop setup, the screen room card games....always the place for us kids to grow up and have fun there. "mark your vote ta for Rota" car with roof mounted speaker...so much fun we had there, gathering and playing daily and always treated as family.

Tommy Libby - June 24, 2021 at 02:14 PM



“ As a pastor who worked for years in Napa, I have only the greatest admiration for the dedicated service Mr. Rota provided to the people of his native town. If I called the funeral home and someone other than Ernie answered, it meant that he was out directing a funeral. When families called, he went out personally, often out into the rural areas of Napa County, even at late at night, and when he was pushing 90 years old. He was at his reassuring best when meeting with bereaved families, as I accompanied some of them to his office to arrange services. One of the best examples of a Catholic gentleman, and a fine human being. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and may Your perpetual light shine upon him.

William P Donahue - June 24, 2021 at 02:45 AM

EB

“ Ernie was the consummate funeral director and gentleman. It was always wonderful to see him not wearing a necktie at Sons of Italy events. He was the end-of-the-line for Napa's old time undertakers; he gave us fledgling undertakers a man to imitate, to follow. It really saddens me to know that the Napa community no longer has Ernie's compassion and core of service to mankind. He was a good man, and I am honored to have known him.

*Eric Butler
Cleveland, Ohio*

Eric Butler - June 23, 2021 at 04:43 PM

JC

“ Ernie was truly a good person; he was someone to emulate in our everyday lives. Ernie was a saint - with a small "s".

He did much good in his life; especially to others' - & not just the well known. He really helped my dad, Jack Coakley, especially during his final years.

Ernie, Thank You for your many kindnesses towards all of us who knew you.

YOU were a good & great human being.

John Coakley - June 22, 2021 at 03:05 PM

PK

“ A truly fine person. He came personally, Sept. 28, 2015 with one assistant to pick up my husband's body at our home at about 10 pm that night. My husband really liked and enjoyed knowing him and asked me to have Ernie make the arrangements. Ernie was very kind and empathetic and made my grief much more bearable.

Ernie was a very classy man and the world was certainly better for him having been amongst us.

Patricia Kubicki

Patricia Kubicki - June 22, 2021 at 01:08 PM

LG

“ Leslie and Family, I am so sorry for the loss of your father. What a staple in the lives of everyone who knew him. He was such a comfort to all the people who lost their loved ones. Just a caring and wonderful person. What a great loss to the you and the community. Our hearts are saddened for you all. May all the happy memories of him help get you through this time of sadness.

Lynda and Guiducci Family

Lynda P Guiducci - June 20, 2021 at 11:54 AM

ME

“ My Uncle Ernie was a special man. Always calm, smiling, and welcoming. His compassion and care for others was an example I watched as I grew - and it has become clearer over the past few years. Only as I reached adulthood did I understand what a giving person he was: to his family, his country, his community, his Church. His love for my Dad, Roy, and our entire extended family never wavered. There's a place of honor in heaven for this man! God Bless you, Uncle Ernie. We will all miss you, but your love lives on with us. My husband John joins me in sending our prayers and sincere condolences to Leslie, Elizabeth, and Suzanne.

Marilyn Erwin - June 19, 2021 at 08:16 PM

SW

“ Worked with your brother Warren at Basalt Rock Company and our wives were members of take pounds off sensibility TOPS. Been on my list to visit you but kept on putting off. Last time before virus Walmart. A sad day. Stanley D. Waggoner

Stanley D. Waggoner - June 18, 2021 at 04:09 PM

JC

“ Jeanette Cherrington lit a candle in memory of Ernest A. Rota



Jeanette Cherrington - June 18, 2021 at 11:11 AM

T.

“ The Lewis and Kelley Family . purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Ernest A. Rota.



The Lewis and Kelley Family . - June 18, 2021 at 09:33 AM