



Bill G. Halbert

March 11, 1925 - February 24, 2020

Services for Billy Gene “Bill” Halbert, 94, of Flint, Texas will be held on Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. at Bullard First United Methodist Church with Rev. David Brasher officiating. Burial will follow at the Kilgore City Cemetery.

Bill Halbert died on February 24, 2020 in Flint. He was born to Minnie Belle Harris and Elzie Washington Halbert, Sr. on March 11, 1925 in Eastland, TX. He faced privation and difficulty growing up in the oil fields of Texas during the Great Depression. Hardship was met with tragedy when an accident took the life of Bill’s mother and two older brothers when he was just a child. With petroleum exploration surging in Texas during the 1930s, his father moved to wherever oilfield work was available – from the plains of West Texas at Crane and McCamey, to the East Texas oil boom in Kilgore – taking Bill and his brother, Elzie, Jr. along.

Upon the outbreak of World War II, Bill volunteered to fight as soon as he was able. On his 18th birthday in 1943, he left high school before graduation to join the United States Army Air Corps. As a 19-year-old B-26 Marauder bomber pilot, he flew continuous combat missions over Italy, France, and Germany until the end of the war. Halbert returned to Kilgore after the war, earned his high school diploma, and enrolled at Kilgore Junior College. He excelled in sports, especially football and basketball. His football team competed in the inaugural Junior College Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA in 1946. He went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in petroleum engineering at the University of Oklahoma. While there, he began dating and then married the love of his life for 69 years, Avis Dena Franke. They became the proud parents of three daughters, Mundina, Cindy and Rebecca.

Having remained in the Air Force Reserve after World War II, Halbert was recalled to active duty at the onset of the Korean War. His assignments kept him in the U.S. during the war, where he was instrumental in training fighter pilots and anti-aircraft gunners. Eventually assigned to fly the F-86 Sabre and the F-100 Super Sabre fighter jets, he flew a number of missions in and around the Demilitarized Zone in Korea. Halbert supported

combat operations during the Vietnam War as a mission planner, pilot, and forward air controller, completing more than 30 combat flight sorties against the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.

Before his thirty-four years of military service were concluded, Halbert had served during three wars, had flown forty-two bomber missions over Europe, and numerous jet fighter operations in Korea and Vietnam. He also served worldwide during peacetime and received assignments as a Brigadier General's aide-de-camp, an assistant for the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon, and as Deputy Commander of Ellington Air Force Base in Houston, TX. Halbert also attended the National War College.

In 1977, Bill retired from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel, whereupon he began a new, full-time career as a professional golfer. Having been introduced to golf while serving as the aide to Major General Edward J. Timberlake, Halbert excelled in the sport during his Air Force years and eventually won several tournaments on the military circuit of competition. One of his notable victories was the U.S. Air Force Seniors Worldwide Golf Championship in 1974. Later as a civilian, Bill qualified as a PGA Golf Professional and for twenty-one years served as an Assistant Pro and Head Pro at several golf courses in the Austin and New Braunfels, Texas areas. In the 1980s, he competed in both the U.S. Senior Open and the PGA Senior Open, and competed with Arnold Palmer, Billy Casper, Gene Littler, and Sam Sneed.

Though Bill's life reflected many personal achievements, it also revealed a consistent investment in the lives of others. He has been a dedicated and loving husband and father, spending his time, energy and treasure on his most prized possession, his family. His life was punctuated with a myriad of volunteer roles such as PTA president, baseball coach, Sunday school teacher and elementary school tutor. As a PGA professional, he regularly donated his time and skills over many years to encourage young people to pursue and enjoy the game of golf. His activities were comprised of countless charity events and youth golf clinics. He was an instructor and mentor for current PGA golf professional Jimmy Walker while in his youth. Up until his final days he served as a docent for the Historic Aviation Memorial Museum in Tyler, and as a public speaker and mentor to many. Simply stated, Bill Halbert's life, both public and private, has been dedicated to the benefit and well-being of others.

Bill was preceded in death by his mother, Minnie Harris Halbert of Eastland, TX; father, E. W. Halbert, Sr. of Kilgore, TX; brothers, Clifton Halbert and Elbert Halbert of Eastland, E. W. Halbert, Jr. of Kilgore; and sister, Janie Sennikoff of Quitman, TX. He is survived by his wife, Avis Franke Halbert of Flint, TX; children, Mundina O'Driscoll and husband Danny of

Batesburg, SC, Cindy Cisco and husband Rick of Baytown, TX, and Rebecca Mohr and husband David of Tyler, TX; grandchildren, Colleen Morgan and husband Andrew of Batesburg, SC, Lori Alexander of Baytown, TX, Jill Moore and husband Jared of Huffman, TX, Meredith Mohr of Houston, TX, Kate Pinkston and husband Michael of Norfolk, VA, and Joseph Mohr of Tyler; great-grandchildren Kaley and Madison Alexander, Colt and Case Moore, and Audrey Pinkston.

Pallbearers will be David Mohr, Rick Cisco, Joseph Mohr, and Cliff Halbert. Honorary pallbearers will be Danny O'Driscoll, Andrew Morgan, Jared Moore and Michael Pinkston.

Visitation will be from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. on February 28, 2020 at Stewart Family Funeral Home, 7525 Old Jacksonville Highway in Tyler.

If desired, memorials may be made to the Children's Advocacy Center of Smith County, 2210 Frankston Hwy., Tyler, TX 75701, or any charity of your choice that supports child welfare.

Cemetery

Kilgore City Cemetery

200 Memorial St.

Kilgore, TX, 75662

Events

FEB **Visitation** 05:00PM - 07:00PM

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Stewart Family Funeral Home

7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy, Tyler, TX, US, 75703

FEB **Service** 02:00PM

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Bullard First United Methodist Church

204 S. Rather Street, Bullard, TX, US, 75757

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Stewart Family Funeral Home - February 26 at 06:00 PM



“ Dear Halbert Family,

I did not know Mr Halbert but I would have liked to have known him. After reading his obituary in the local paper, I was so impressed with his life accomplishments and service to our great country that I felt like mentioning it to you. What an amazing man after loosing his mother and brothers at such an impressionable time in his life yet overcoming that to bravely serve in not one, but three wars and continue his education and unselfish service to others. How proud you must all be. A wonderful complete life he lived. May your memories help you through the coming days.

My sincere condolences,
Libby Rust New Braunfels

Libby Rust - March 04 at 01:49 PM



“ Thank you so much for your kind words. My dad was a really special man!

Rebecca Mohr - March 04 at 10:20 PM



“ As a young Air Force officer I was lucky enough to have Colonel Halbert as my boss in the mid-70's. He was a wonderful man to work for and was greatly admired by everyone. By example, he taught me many valuable lessons, not the least of which was, "Always listen to and respect your staff ". Stelvin L. (Dude) Downs, Air Force RET.

Stelvin L. (Dude) Downs - February 29 at 08:38 PM



“ Thank you so much for your kind words. You and Lynne are such good friends. We thank you!

Rebecca Mohr - March 03 at 05:28 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



February 28 at 10:21 AM



“ Charles & Sarah Thompson, New Braunfels, TX purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



Charles & Sarah Thompson, New Braunfels, TX - February 27 at 05:19 PM



“ Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



February 27 at 12:35 PM



“ My condolences to all the Halberts,

Bill was quite an accomplished man. It was my privilege to call on him as a salesman representing several golf companies over the years..Always a gentleman! He was a very fine golf pro and I always enjoyed his stories as an aviator.

Alan Dale
New Braunfels, TX

Alan Dale - February 26 at 11:11 PM



“ Thank you Alan. He loved Landa Park that's for sure!

Rebecca Mohr - February 27 at 08:32 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



February 26 at 11:00 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



February 26 at 09:16 PM



“ Mrs.Halbert and family, so very sorry to hear of Mr. Halberts passing.....Mr. Halbert hired me to work at the landa park golf shop in 1986 and I worked for the golf course till 2015 when I retired, Mr. Halbert always kept busy working on the golf carts or repairing golf clubs or working behind the counter, it was a pleasure to work for him he was a very nice boss and a good hearted person.

My condolences to the family.....

Elizabeth Martinez

New Braunfels Tx.

Elizabeth Martinez - February 26 at 06:36 PM



“ Elizabeth, thank you so much for those kind words. Rebecca Mohr (Bill and Avis's daughter)

Rebecca Mohr - February 27 at 08:31 AM



“ A beautiful video. What a handsome young pilot. Bill was a real hero and a good man. He loved being out at HAMM and he was a mentor to many of us. We will miss Bill and his impish smile.

marshall ewing - February 27 at 04:49 PM



“ Landa Park Golf Course extended family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



Landa Park Golf Course extended family - February 26 at 06:11 PM



“ 7 files added to the album LifeTributes



Stewart Family Funeral Home - February 26 at 06:02 PM



“ We find this morning we have much to be thankful for as all of our daily (and future) concerns are on hold for now while we remember and honor our most excellent and extraordinary Opa/Daddy/Bill.

His passing was gentle and peaceful. Surrounded by dear family and his caregiver, I don't know that I will ever again witness a more moving or sweeter scene as when he depart this life. It will be remembered it for all time.

I was awfully fond of that old guy, and will dearly miss him...I'm glad to have had so many excellent years with him. We now have a few days just to think about all he did, how he influenced our lives...and to remember!

I think of him now while listening to this beautiful hymn,
Mansions of the Lord by the West Point Band and Glee Club

<https://youtu.be/jccNoxn1HoU>

With love and admiration,
David Mohr

David Mohr - February 26 at 04:02 PM



“ Linda Wilson lit a candle in memory of Bill G. Halbert



Linda Wilson - February 26 at 03:52 PM



“ Steve & Debbie Moore purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



Steve & Debbie Moore - February 26 at 03:36 PM



“ The Downs Families purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Bill G. Halbert.



The Downs Families - February 26 at 03:18 PM