



Bill Abbott

April 22, 1928 - March 19, 2006

Today Bill Abbott won his battle. After a prolonged conflict against a failing body and much pain, his battle ended and he is now at rest with the Lord. On Mar. 19, 2006, W. D. "Bill" Abbott along with the many that went before is at ease in the presence of the Lord. Having retired from the Marines, his love for God and Country were unquestionable, as was his love for his wife of 23 years, JoAnn Abbott. Bill did not make friends easy, but once he considered a person his friend, that person would be a trusted friend for life. He loved recalling stories of the years he spent in the Marines, serving his country. Bill had the honor of training many young men for the Marines and was known internationally for his expertise in weapons and served on four U.S. Olympic Shooting teams. He accumulated many medals and trophies for his marksmanship. Bill had opportunity to work with Roy Rogers as they traveled to open new gun clubs. He represented the Marines and showcased his skills in skeet and trap. Bill had the honor of knowing General Paul Tibbits, who's mother was Enola Gay, the same name of the plane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima. William Dean Abbott found a lifelong friend in his partner of many years, John Hogan. He had been a Certified Peace Officer for the State of Texas, was a Deputy Game Warden, a Deputy Sheriff for Cherokee County, a Deputy Constable for Smith County, and a Special Deputy U.S. Marshall and served Judge Robert M. Parker until his retirement. He always championed law and order, honesty and was a friend to a man or child in need. There are many mentions and stories in books and other print about Bill

Abbott, most recently featured in "Death From Afar" by Chandler and Chandler. He tried to pen his experiences "in Country", but the memories were too difficult to express and weighed heavy on his heart. He did like to speak about his experiences in Vietnam and Korea. He served under Chesty Puller in Korea and later Col. Walter M. Walsh. One of his favorite recollections came from when Bill found children using empty ammo boxes for wagons. At this time Bill was Platoon Commander, Third Marine Snipers at Camp Carroll in Vietnam, Bill found a source back home and had some little red wagons delivered to him in country. He "traded" the children the ammo boxes for a shiny new red wagon. After a press photo reached the U.S. and appeared in the news, children all across America saved their pennies and sent them to help buy more red wagons. Operation Little Red Wagon was born. The original wagon sits on display in the Amateur Trap Shooters Association in Vandalia, Ohio. Bill often said the reward was the smiles on the faces of the children after receiving a new wagon. After traveling the world with his beloved Marine Corps, he settled back in East Texas. In 1982, he married the love of his life, Jo Ann. He was a devoted husband and friend. He is survived by his wife of 23 years, Jo Ann Abbott; children, Randy Abbott and wife Julie of Edmond, Okla., and Thoene Lynn Abbott of Colo.; mother-in-law, Mary Woods Allen; sisters-in-law, Dianna Wood and husband Bob of Lindale, Mary Demaret and husband David of Houston, Roseanna Bolla and husband Chuck of Chandler, Lenora Cawthon and husband Jack of Lindale; eight grandchildren, James and Matthew Abbott and Christy, Cole, Kyle, and Chris Jenkins, and Brooks and Ashley McGinnis all of whom live out of state; two great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews that love him. Many of his family were present when the Lord called him home. His was the strong heart of a Marine and he was bigger than life in the eyes of those he helped or protected. At ease, at last. Semper Fi, Bill, we'll miss you. The family will receive friends from 6-8pm Wednesday at Stewart Family, 7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy., south Tyler. Funeral services are scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Thursday in the Chapel of Stewart Family Funeral Home with Rev. Byron

Howard officiating. Burial will follow in Lindale City Cemetery. Pallbearers will be the U.S. Marine Corps Honor Guard. Honorary Pallbearers will be Judge Robert M. Parker, Col. Walter Walsh, Gen. Paul Tibbets, Maj. Jim Land, Ken Wilson, Capt. Gene Adkins, Don L. Smith, Col. Dave Willis, Al Morrison, Randy Abbott, Bob Wood, David Demaret, Charles Bolla, Jack Cawthon, Jesse Maberry, the U. S. Marine Corps, and Smith and Cherokee County Law Enforcement.

Tribute Wall

CP

“ As I read Bill's obituary I am reminded of what I would tell people when they asked me why I had enlisted in the Corps after college; because I want to lead the kind of life that someone one day will want to write a book about. I believe Bill is a perfect example of that. Mine and my wife's prayers are with you and your family, as we all know Bill is now guarding the streets of heaven with all his Marine brothers.

*Semper Fidelis,
Capt Phillips*

Capt Matthew Phillips - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

BH

“ Bill I will always remember your ability to shoot International trap, we are sorry to lose you, your friend and International shooter, Billy Hicks.

Billy & Barbara Hicks - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

NI

“ tried to help Bill and Jo as the last few months have taxed them mentally and fiscally. Bill resigned from his post as Special Deputy U.S. Marshall because his body wouldn't allow him to continue. He began declining several years ago, and a blessing, in a way, was his wife was able to be at home (she is disabled) and was with him. The decline became a slide and for the last six months, our mother, Bill's mother in law, Mary Allen Woods, has been living with them to help assist Jo in his care. A proud family never asks for help, so we won't. I'm sure the memorials will be many. Thanks to all who leaves a message for my sister. To write her personally, she can be reached at Jo Ann Abbott, P.O. Box 10, Bullard, Texas 75757. Semper Fi.

Nina - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

RW

“ To Jo Ann Abbott: Just wanted you to know that I am greatly saddened about your loss. Just had a conversation about Bill last Friday and mentioned that I needed to go see him...wish I had. Even though life seemed to "get busy" and I hadn't visited with Bill in a good while, I often thought of him and expressed to people what a great person he was. My usual description of Bill was "Bill Abbott is the real deal, nothing fake about that guy or his accomplishments". I'm proud to know him. I have to be away in a homeland terrorist school this week and will not be able to make the funeral, but I wanted to let you know that I will be thinking about you and Bill.

We have lost a Great American.

Rick Waller.

Rick Waller - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ Jo Ann,
We are sorry to hear about Bill. He left a big mark everywhere he went. I'm gratified that we were able to record all we did in the "Death From Afar" series of books. I hope you are holding up and able to get through all this in good shape.

Respectfully,

Norman Chandler, Sr.

Lt. Col. USMC Ret.

Lt. Col. Norman Chandler - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LU

“ It saddens me to hear the news of any of my Brothers passing away, but to hear about one that was so distinguished and assuredly commanded such great respect saddens me even more so. In the short time I have spent in the Marines, I have learned the true meaning of brotherhood and Semper Fi. I have learned that every Marine is my brother and I mourn along side you. My heart sincerely goes out to you and your family. I can only hope that I can one day become as decorated and loyal to the Marines as Mr. Abbot was. It is assuring to know that he is now at peace with all of our brothers before us and guarding the gates of Heaven. Semper Fi, Brother, and God Bless

Lcpl Douglas Dickerson, USMCR - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

KH

“ We just wanted to say sorry for your loss. Love the story about the little red wagons, thats wonderful.

Take care and God Bless.

Kathy Adams Holder - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

AI

“ It was a pleasure to know Bill Abbott and consider him a friend. He was an outstanding individual and an exemplary patriot. He represented everything that is great about the Marine Corps and our nation. My sympathy goes to JoAnn and others of his family. He will be missed.

Ashton Oravetz, III - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

ED

“ *JoAnn, we are sure sorry to hear about Bill.
This is never an easy time. We know you will miss him. We still miss
Mother and Bud. There are times, when I cannot believe they are
not with us. Take care and we sincerely hope you will be blessed.
Most sincerely
Emmett and Dorothy DeVolin*

Emmett and Dorothy DeVolin - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LA

“ *I served on the Jacksonville Police Department during the 1980's.
With my father having been a marine, I always enjoyed visiting with
Bill.*

His love of county was never questioned.

His love of law enforcement was unparalleled.

*He will be missed. There will be another angel in heaven looking
over our men and women in uniform..*

Semper Fi Bill

Lt. Bill Avera - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

WG

“ My heart was heavy when I learned of Mr. Abbott's passing. I wouldn't take anything for having recently visited with him. It is not difficult for an honorable man to make friends. An honorable man simply expects more from someone he considers a friend. I am proud to have been called 'friend' by Bill Abbott. My brothers Darrell, Clint, and Kenneth as well as our fellow officers at the Tyler Police Department who knew Bill asked me to convey their condolences to his family. My prayer is that the Lord will comfort the Abbott family in the way that only He can.

Wendell R. Gardner - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

OC

“ I read of Mr. Abbott's passing in the Jacksonville Daily Progress. I never met him but consider him a friend and brother at arms. Once a brother in blue, always a brother in blue. Rest in Peace and stand your post with honor. I am sure all peace officers in the East Texas Area will keep the family in their prayers for the next few weeks.

Officer Greg Compton - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

SW

“ I want to offer my condolences to the family of a fine man. It was my distinct pleasure to visit with Mr. Abbott on several occasions while shooting at his range. The topics were wide and always interesting. I will always value his service to our country and the words of wisdom that came from one of our "shooting lessons". We have lost a true hero!

Sincerely

Steve Wise

Steve Wise - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

HF

“ In 1973 several things fell together to bring me to Tyler, as an FBI Agent. By about 1975 I met Bill Abbott while investigating an abandoned stolen car, and Bill, a deputy constable, was a key witness in identifying the culprit. Our friendship grew and by the time new circumstances caused my transfer from Tyler about five years later, he was among my most valued friends. I now count him as one of the jewels which have accumulated in my treasure chest of life. My deepest sympathy and condolences to his family. "Leo"

Harold "Leo" Fabriz - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM

LE

“ Well Bill-
It's been a few days and already I greatly miss our nightly ritual of telling you hello on the phone and the dog barking everytime she hears your name. You have always been greater than life in my eyes and a honorable man. I will always remember your stories of Vietnam and the many challenges of you and your Marine brothers. I will tell my grandchildren of their Uncle Bill and what a good man he was, and how he defended our country with dignity. We love you and miss you....

Lenora - March 19, 2006 at 12:00 AM