



William Dixon

August 25, 1921 - March 23, 2007

William Benjamin Dixon, 85 of Chandler, TX formerly of Wichita Falls, TX passed away peacefully in his home on March 23. Mr. Dixon was born on August 25, 1921 in Wichita Falls. He attended public schools and graduated from Wichita Falls High School in 1939. He then attended Texas A&M and was a graduate of the class of 1943. Upon graduation from A&M, he was commissioned for as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U. S. Army and served during World War II as an air observation pilot in Europe. He was wounded in action when his plane was shot down over Germany in April of 1945. He received the American Campaign Medal with 2 bronze stars, Air medal and a Purple Heart of his service. After his discharge from the Army, he served in the United States Army Reserve, the Texas National Guard and U. S. National Guard from 1946 until his retirement in 1981. He retired with the rank of Lt. Colonel. Mr. Dixon, son of Jesse Garnett Dixon and Etta Lou Thompson Dixon spent his career in the construction business starting as a homebuilder and later as a general contractor in Wichita Falls. After moving to the Dallas area, he continued his construction career as an owner's representative for Zale's Jewelers and later served in a similar capacity for Target Stores, where he worked for 14 years until his retirement in 1992. Mr. Dixon or "Bill" as he was known to longtime friends, enjoyed many activities after the war he continued to fly as well as play tennis. After retirement, he enjoyed wood carving and painting. He and his devoted wife Purna Lee also enjoyed traveling and visiting their grandchildren. In recent years, health problems had

limited his mobility, but he never lost his sense of humor and never tired of teasing his wife and children. In later years, he took particular pride in the accomplishments of his 12 grandchildren who have brought him great joy as he has watched each of them grow into adulthood. When speaking to his grandchildren he always told each of them how proud he was of them. When speaking about his grandchildren, he would often say "There's not a clinker in the bunch." Mr. Dixon is preceded in death by his parents Jesse G. and Lou Etta Dixon, his brother Jesse (Pete) Dixon and his nephew Jerry Dixon. He is survived by his loving and devoted wife of 59 years, Purna Lee Dixon, his children, Laura Elizabeth Hansbrough and husband Dennis, William B. Dixon Jr. And his wife Karen Dixon, John Robert Dixon and his wife Lee Dixon, Carol Ann Erwin and her husband Roy Erwin, and Milly Ann Vickery and her husband Robert Vickery. He is also survived by his twelve grandchildren, Emily Ann Hansbrough, William Benjamin Dixon III, Andrew Rory Hansbrough, Zachary Bingham Dixon, Sarah Beth Erwin, Caitlin Elaine Dixon, Molly Marie Erwin, Margaret Eden Hansbrough, Margaret Case Dixon, Charles Benjamin Erwin, Mary Elizabeth Vickery, and Jesse Douglas Vickery. He is also survived by many friends. Pallbearers will be Jerry Vickery, Thomas J. Vickery Jr., William Benjamin Dixon III, Zachary Dixon, Charley Erwin, Andrew Hansbrough, and Jesse Vickery. Services will be held at Highland Presbyterian Church in Tyler on Thursday, March 29, 2007 at 11:00 A.M with Rev. Scott Mackey officiating under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home. Military Burial will be at College Station City Cemetery on Friday, March 30, 2007 at 1:00 P.M. The family will greet visitors at Stewart Family Funeral home on Wednesday, March 28, 2007 from 6-8 pm. Memorials William Benjamin Dixon's name may be made to Legacy Hospice, 120 E. Southtown Drive Tyler. TX 75703 or Children's Cancer Center; Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, MO. For more information or to express condolences, visit www.stewartfamilyfuneral.com

Tribute Wall

BD

“Dad began drifting away from us some time ago. The health problems that had slowly ravaged his body over the past few years began to take a greater toll on his mind. When we called home, we were as likely to be greeted with mild confusion as we were with his familiar, “Hey, kid!”. His daughters became “those nice ladies who visit me”, and his sons often had to re-introduce themselves to him when they would visit. It didn’t matter. When we would part, the tears in his eyes were still real, and the pride in his heart was as genuine as it had always been. “I am so blessed!”, he would say.

He was our Dad, and he was proud of us.

Despite his confusion, the familiar twinkle in his eyes would return from time to time. Those clear blue eyes that charmed our Mom since the beginning and comforted his grandchildren to the end had not lost their magic. There were moments of lucidity that we learned to treasure. He was able to give us just enough of the old Dad to show that he was still the loving husband who had given his heart completely and totally to Mom for sixty years. He was still the father and the grandfather whose unconditional love had comforted and nourished five children and twelve grandchildren. He still cried when he watched a sad movie, and he still beamed with pride when he talked of his family. His mind would sometimes take refuge in times and places he had loved, but that twinkle in his eyes would always bring him back to those who loved him.

In recent months, when his mind and body faded even further away, we all knew it would soon be time for us to say goodbye. We talked about it among ourselves in matter of fact terms, perhaps to hide the fear of facing the day when this sweet, loving man would no longer be with us, or perhaps because we knew he would simply want us to take care of things, the way he always took care of us, and to take care of Mom, the way she had selflessly taken care of him when he was unable to care for himself. It broke our hearts that he lost the ability to tell Mom how much he loved her at the end, but with every caring gesture, she demonstrated a shared love that was

so strong and so pure that it no longer needed words. Her smile became his smile. Her love became his love. They were one, as they had always been, and Mom's gentle care spoke for both of their hearts.

And the day came when it was time to let go. The pain slowly faded from his face, and the body that had fought so valiantly to hold on had finally given in. He was gone. He left us as peacefully as had lived, and Mom's final, loving gift to him was ensuring that he was with family, in his own home, when he left this earth. The sacrifices she made to grant him that gift were heartbreaking and heroic, offering a lesson for her children and grandchildren to carry the rest of their lives.

So, we all came together to say goodbye to Dad. We hugged each other. We comforted Mom. And we talked about Dad. We looked at old photos. We shared stories that made us laugh and cry. And slowly, the man who had begun to fade away a few years before once again became the Dad we all knew and loved. The tired, broken body which had so long endured the ravages of time was once again whole, as the proud smiling cadet at Texas A&M, or the beaming bridegroom who had just married the love of his life. He was the returning war hero, the attentive Dad, the father of the bride, the doting grandfather.

He was our Dad, and he was proud of us.

We buried Dad in College Station, the place that had marked so many beginnings and endings in his life. It was the place where he began a proud military career. It was the place where his sons had gone to school, and his grandchildren after them. It was the last place he worked before he retired. When he was losing the memory of so many pieces of his life, it was one of the last pieces he had held on to. He would have been happy to know that some of the family had settled there, and that still more of his grandchildren would attend school there. It seemed that no other place should be his fi

Bob Dixon - March 23, 2007 at 12:00 AM

“ I as all of the rest of you, love Paw-Paw. He was my hero, he was the drinker of muddy water, he was my favorite hugs. He had a laugh that made you want to be as silly as you could just so you could hear him laugh one more time. Some of my favorite memories are going to Mer-paw and Paw-Paw's house and just pattering away in the shop. That was where all the best stories were told and where I could sit for hours and watch him work on his ducks. I wish I could have had more time with him. But isn't that what I would have said if he had gone four or five years from now? The time that he was here with us was the most special 85 years that have graced the earth. I was talking to Mom and we decided that Paw-Paw was the new greeter at the doors of Heaven. He could always greet people and instantly brighten their day. I think it was that beautiful smile of his or the way his eyes lit up when he smiled. Just thinking about it now brightens my day. I wish there was something that I could say that would do him justice but there are no words to describe him. His favorite things in life were God, Mer-paw, family, and Aggies. I see him when I pray, I see him when I talk to Mer-paw, I see him when I hug my family, and I see him when I think of A&M. The past few years have been hard watching the man that we all love disappear before our very eyes. Even though he was slowly losing every memory he had, every once in a while he would come back. He would perk up when we introduced ourselves and give his usual "Hey Kid?". And when we left, it was always with an "I'm so proud of you kid.?" Those words have never meant so much as they did when he said them. Because I knew that he really was proud of me and everything that I did. Each of us have part of him that means something special to us. I stand before you today because I wanted you to know the paw-paw that I love. For me it was his ability to love. I have never seen anyone love as deeply as him. He loved to make people laugh, he loved to spread his love, and he of course being Bill Dixon, loved to be loved. I as I'm sure the rest of you had no objection to that though, he was the easiest man in the world to love. Paw-Paw spent 85 years here loving us every minute of it and now he gets to spend eternity with God loving us just the same but from a different view. We'll see him again one day and

until then we just have to remember how his hugs were filled with love and his eyes with laughter.

Mary Vickery - March 23, 2007 at 12:00 AM

TM

“ *I just wanted to say I am sorry to hear about your father passing. I just wanted to let you know from mi familia that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your entire family. I would not be where I am today if it was not for the nice kids I hung around with in school, you can be proud of your Father who instilled high ethics and great moral values into his children.....thank-you tony martinez*

Tony Martinez - March 23, 2007 at 12:00 AM

LD

“ *I couldn't have asked for a better father-in-law than Bill. He was a wonderfully warm and charming man who made me feel like one of his own daughters. He had an impish sense of humor and really enjoyed joking around with and performing magic tricks for my daughters when they were young. He just loved being around people. A truly authentic 'people person,' Bill had that gift of relating so well to others. On one of our family visits, I remember watching Bill in action as he greeted customers at the Target store where he worked occasionally after retirement and I could see that customers knew right away Bill's welcome was genuine and was not part of any company script. He put a smile on everyone who walked in. That's the kind of person he was. In fact, I'm smiling right now as I write this. To Purna Lee, Bob, Bill, Betsy, Carol, Milly and the rest of the family: I am thinking of you all and wish I could be there with you. Sending lots of love,
Lee*

Lee Dixon - March 23, 2007 at 12:00 AM

LJ

“ Milly,

I was so sorry to hear of your Dad's passing. It's never easy and leaves an empty space in your heart that cannot be filled by anyone else. But memories are sweet and smiles and laughter as you remember will replace the tears. My prayers are with you and your entire family.

Lynda

Lynda Choate Jagers - March 23, 2007 at 12:00 AM