



## Horsley B. White Jr.

January 8, 1920 - May 21, 2008

Retired USAF MSgt. Horsley Burks "H.B." White, Jr. a longtime resident of San Antonio and Atascosa, Texas passed away Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at the age of 88. A member of the "Greatest Generation" Burks was born January 8, 1920 in Madison Heights, Virginia and was the second of seven children born to parents Horsley Burks White, Sr. and Mary Lillian Hamlet White. His childhood years growing up in Madison Heights and Lynchburg, Virginia were spent hunting and fishing and his "passion" playing baseball. Burks frequently told the stories of hunting in the beautiful wooded areas surrounding Madison Heights with his faithful dog, "Cotton". He was a 1941 graduate of Madison Heights High School where Burks was voted "Best Athletic Boy". Excelling in baseball and basketball. His annual read "Burks wants to play for the Yankees." After high school Burks played semi-pro baseball for surrounding area teams.

Like his brothers, Burks joined the US Military after the US entered World War II. He joined the US Air Force in 1941 and proudly served his country 23 years, stationed at military installations across the US and the world including, Allison Field, Alaska, Ipswich, England; Wiesbaden Germany; Tripoli, Libya and in Texas. Goodfellow, Gary, and Lackland Air Force bases. In the early 60's he played a key role in the establishment of the Military Dog Training School at Medina Base San Antonio. Throughout his military career Burks was fortunate to follow his passion and played baseball for the USAF baseball teams across the globe. Burks always batted fourth and excelled at nearly

every position. He always told the story of the occasion when his team was trailing behind in an important competitive game, the bases were loaded, and as he came up to bat his Commanding Officer's young son sitting nearby yelled "Burks hit a home run!" Burks pointed in the direction of the outfield fence, hit a home run and won the game! While on a weekend leave visiting the home of his barrack roommate and dear friend Ben Smith, he met the love of his life, Velma Lou Smith, Ben's sister. The couple married October 18, 1948 in Memphis, Texas surrounded by family and friends. Many weekends and summers were spent with wife and children & friends South Texas hunting and fishing Falcon Lake, Goose Island State Park, Port Aransas and many camp areas on the Texas gulf coast. Burks retired from the Air Force at Lackland in 1985. Throughout his entire life Burks cherished and maintained the many lifelong friendships he forged while in the military. After his playing years, Burks remained active officiating as a Baseball Umpire for the Alamo Umpires Association. After his military retirement, he remained active outdoors hunting, fishing, boating, and light farming and ranching. In addition he enjoyed raising Mexican Cur and Rat Terrier puppies. Horsley, as he was affectionately called in his senior years, was a 44 year member of Lackland Baptist Church, a member of the VFW Post #6012, a lifetime member of the Somerset Masonic Lodge Chapter #1205 and Endowed Membership of Lytle Chapter #329, R.A.M. and Lytle Council #266 R.&S.M. He was an active participant with his wife Velma in the Order of the Eastern Star chapters Somerset #730 and Lytle #355. He was preceded in death by his father Horsley Burks White, Sr., mother Mary Lillian Hamlet White, brothers Rennie D, White, Sr, Hamlet White, sisters Baldwin Kidd, Lillian Bryant Kenton, and Irma Mitchell Engledove. Horsley is survived by his devoted and loving wife of 60 years Velma L. White; son Jerry Wayne White & Janie Harris of San Antonio; daughter Donna Gale Biles and Quinton R. Biles of Helotes, TX; and daughter Karen Rene Mella and husband Chas A. Mella of Rockport, TX.; sister Dorothy Dalton of Lynchburg, Virginia, nephew Rennie D. White, Jr. and wife Sue of Cedar Point, North Carolina; niece Joye Beth Rhodes and

husband J Thomas Rhodes, III of San Antonio; numerous loving nieces and nephews and other loving family members and friends in Madison Heights & Lynchburg, Virginia, San Antonio and Amarillo, TX. and throughout the country.

### Services

Family received friends on May 23, 2008 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Mission Park funeral Chapels South. Funeral services will be held on 24th of May 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at Mission Park Funeral Chapels South. A procession to a graveside at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery with Full Military Honors and a Masonic Graveside tribute will follow. Pallbearers are Brothers from Somerset Masonic Lodge #1205. The family wishes to express deepest appreciation to the skillful doctors and nurses at Wilford

# Tribute Wall

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“ *It has been years since I saw Burks, But I remember him well. I am Thomas L. White, Son of Lloyd & Mae White & grandson of Jeff White & Rebeca White. I Sure am sorry to hear he passed. God Be With You...*  
*Sincerely, Tommy*

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**Thomas L. White** - May 26, 2008 at 12:00 AM