



Claude Harper

July 25, 1924 - May 20, 2013

Claude Eugene Harper, age 88 years, a resident of Vienna, Illinois, passed away Monday afternoon, May 20, 2013, at Southgate Health Care Center in Metropolis, Illinois.

Claude was born near Ozark, IL, on July 25, 1924, the son of Fred & Amy (Martin) Harper. He was a 1942 graduate of Vienna High School. Claude was united in marriage to Wilda Elizabeth Parker on March 17, 1943, and he entered active duty in the U.S. Army twelve days later.

Claude was trained as a radio operator and gunner and was assigned to be a radio operator on a B-17 crew in the 91st Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force stationed at Bassingbourn Airfield in England. He flew twenty-four bombing missions during the late summer and fall of 1944. On November 2, 1944, his aircraft was shot down over Germany. Three of his fellow crew members were killed in the aircraft explosion, and he received a serious injury to his left arm. He was held as a prisoner of war for the last five months of the war in Europe.

After working at a variety of jobs during the ten years following the war, he became a partner with Howard Underwood as owners of the U&H Food Center on the Vienna town square from 1957 to 1970.

Claude then he served as Johnson County Treasurer and Collector from 1970

until he retired in 1992.

In later years he learned to fly and shared ownership of an airplane with a small group of friends; he trained and became certified as an emergency medical technician and worked with the ambulance service in Vienna; and he helped to operate the food pantry at the First Baptist Church.

For many years he served as a deacon (later deacon emeritus), Sunday school superintendent, Sunday school teacher and choir member at the First Baptist Church in Vienna.

Claude and Wilda are survived by their sons, Don & Chris Harper and Bill & Cynthia Harper, their daughter, Patti Harper, their granddaughters, Anita and Liz, their grandsons, Jeremy, Abe and Ben, and great-grandchildren, Sloane, Bobby, Alanna, Natalie, Alex, Zoe, Jacob, Reilly and Connor; a brother – Verne Harper of Washington and a sister – Rosalie Steinhour of Springfield, IL.

Wilda passed away in 1977, after thirty-four years of marriage. In 1978, Claude married Velma (Perkins) Herren. She survives. Claude is also survived by Velma's children – Sherry & Jeff Moore, Mike & Agnes Herren, Randy & Rita Herren, and Danny & Bev Herren along with their families.

Funeral services will be held Thursday, May 23, 2013, at 1 PM at Bailey Funeral Home in Vienna. Dr. Ed Hollis will officiate. Burial will be in Reynoldsburg Cemetery near Tunnel Hill. Military graveside rites will be accorded by the Beggs-Gurley VFW Post 5222 of Vienna and the Illinois National Guard Burial Honors Detail.

Visitation will be from 11 AM – 1 PM Thursday at Bailey Funeral Home in Vienna.

Memorials may be made to the First Baptist Church, PO Box 727, Vienna, Illinois 62995.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **23**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Bailey Funeral Home
705 North First Street
PO Box 695
Vienna, IL 62995
(618) 658-2311
baileyfhinc@hotmail.com
<https://baileyfh.com>

Service

MAY **23**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Bailey Funeral Home
705 North First Street
PO Box 695
Vienna, IL 62995
(618) 658-2311
baileyfhinc@hotmail.com
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Tribute Wall



“ *Claude Harper*

January 30, 2023 at 12:19 AM



“ *Joy Morris Trammell lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Joy Morris Trammell - May 27, 2013 at 06:06 PM



“ *Wanda Florey lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Wanda Florey - May 24, 2013 at 07:13 AM

VH

“ I have known Claude all my life. When we living in Chicago eighty three years ago Claude was five and I was three. Our Mother would send us to the store to get a few items. On one snowy day she sent us to the store to get milk and bread. I got to carry the money (a twenty dollar bill). Claude ordered the items and ask me to give the clerk the money. I looked through my pockets and we couldn't find the money. I lost the twenty dollar bill. We walked back and every street crossing we looked every place and at the one we waited the longest time you guessed it the twenty dollar bill was half covered by the snow. Our Angel was watching over us. We went back to the store got the items and Claude was a little disturbed so he got to carry the money home. Claude and I entered the service during World War II and he left the service after the war but I remained in and retired in 1967. I honor him for his service to his country and more than that I honor him for his work he did in his church. For fifty years he worked to establish the Food Bank and keep it going until he was unable to work at it any more. Lift up your hands high Claude its your time to bask in the heavenly places. give greetings to those I love. Love you. Your brother Verne

Verne Harper - May 23, 2013 at 10:07 PM

RH

I feel sorry for Aunt Amy having all you boys...LOL Poor little Sissy...

Robin Harper-Whitehead - June 14, 2013 at 10:42 AM

RH

“ *Claudes service was wonderful*

Robin Harper-Whitehead - May 23, 2013 at 09:36 PM

NV

“ Pat:

So very sorry to hear of your loss. Thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Nancy Vincent

Nancy Vincent - May 23, 2013 at 12:35 PM

GL

“ *I met Claudewhile working for the County. Sorry to hear of his passing. Thoughts and prayers are with the family.*

Georgia Lee

Georgia Lee - May 23, 2013 at 11:11 AM

RH

“ *Claude was always the joy of the Harper Reunion in years past with his picture show. I always loved looking at the old pictures of family past and the ones that he had always taken at the past family reunions. He always captured so much. I was always amazed at what he went thru as a POW, the story was just un real and how strong he had to be but he was and made it thru. Claude and all his brothers and sister will always be a large part of my past and my memories of those gone, Freddie, Joe Bennie and Larry. I love Rosalie and Verney and I pray that they will have some comfort but losing Claude. Prayers to his wife and her family and Sherry esp. I know how close they were.*



Robin Harper-Whitehead - May 23, 2013 at 10:38 AM

CH

“ *Mr. Harper was such a kind man. I very much enjoyed hearing his stories of flying in the war & later with friends. He also told me about his trips to San Padre Island. Mr. Harper will be missed. Prayers for his family. Christy Haney (former employee of Integra Bank, Vienna)*

Christy Haney - May 23, 2013 at 10:25 AM

JR

“ *Jim & Diane Rainbolt lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Jim & Diane Rainbolt - May 21, 2013 at 10:16 PM

EA

“ *Ed & Diane Annable lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Ed & Diane Annable - May 21, 2013 at 08:44 PM

HV

“ *Harold And Georgia Vinson lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Harold and Georgia Vinson - May 21, 2013 at 08:25 PM

JH

“ Jack And Jackie Harper lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper



Jack and Jackie Harper - May 21, 2013 at 07:58 PM

SH

“ Pat, I am so sorry to hear of your loss. Know that your Happyghan family, and myself in particular are here should you need a shoulder to lean on.

Love and gentle hugs, Sherri.

Sherri - May 21, 2013 at 05:58 PM

JT

“ Julie Tucker lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper



Julie Tucker - May 21, 2013 at 02:03 PM

CM

“ I will always cherish the friendship and "boss-employee" relationship I had with Claude. He was a great boss and friend. My sympathy and prayers go out to the family. Carolyn McGill

Carolyn McGill - May 21, 2013 at 12:02 PM

DM

“ I will always cherish the great times Claude and I enjoyed flying together. Our prayers and sympathy to his family. Donnie and Jolene Morris



Donnie and Jolene Morris - May 21, 2013 at 09:30 AM

GM

“ Gale & Phyllis McGowan lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper



Gale & Phyllis McGowan - May 20, 2013 at 10:54 PM

FK

“ Floyd And Linda Koehler lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper



Floyd and Linda Koehler - May 20, 2013 at 09:59 PM

RB

“ Rich And Kaen Brumley lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper



Rich and Kaen Brumley - May 20, 2013 at 09:37 PM

RP

“ *Ray & Imogene Phelps lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Ray & Imogene Phelps - May 20, 2013 at 09:36 PM

BR

“ *Bobby Rentfro lit a candle in memory of Claude Harper*



Bobby Rentfro - May 20, 2013 at 08:56 PM