



Col. Albert J. DeGroot

April 17, 2020

Col. Albert J. DeGroot (USAF Ret.), 87, originally of Philadelphia, PA, passed away, Friday, April 17, 2020 at the Willow Valley Communities in Lancaster, PA. He was the youngest of five children to the late Gilbert DeGroot and Marie Scherpereel DeGroot. His wife of nearly 67 years and the love of his life, Marion Cresson DeGroot, along with their three sons were at his bedside.

Albert served a distinguished career in the United States Air Force for 26 years in various capacities spanning the globe but always considered himself first and foremost a Fighter Pilot. After the Air Force, he continued a corporate aviation career working for both Chester County Aviation and Keystone Foods for another 22 years. As his career closed, he maintained close relationships with many of his fellow aviators and was active in the Super Sabre Society and the Order of the Daedalians, allowing him to relive his love of flying fighter jets.

He later authored his autobiography “A Flight through Life” and captured his life and love of aviation in his own words:

“It’s one man’s flight through life and it involved some turbulence and even a few lightning strikes. But occasional rough weather is part of the big flight plan and all-in-all it’s been a helluva ride!”

The cover of "A Flight Through Life" features a picture of one of his favorite rides: a North American F-100, part of his 90th Fighter Squadron, which was accessioned into the Smithsonian Udvar-Hazy collection where his book was introduced.

In addition to his wife, Marion, Albert is survived by his three sons: Steve DeGroote, husband to Caren, and their children, Nicholas and Jennay of Lewis Center, OH, David DeGroote of Pittsburgh, PA and Douglas DeGroote, husband to Maggie of Issaquah, WA. He is also survived by his brother, Gilbert DeGroote Jr., husband to Catherine Richmond DeGroote of Philadelphia, PA.

Funeral services and interment will be held at Arlington National Cemetery at a future date.

"In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Michael J. Fox Foundation to help find a cure for Parkinson's disease."

Tribute Wall



“ *Col. Albert J. DeGroote*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *marian doug, sorry for your loss. a great man and wonderful neighbor on Wedgewood Drive. My best from Nicole, Bobby Gorman and Myself Bob Boyer. Will remember the good times we shared. Again from the Boyers from 355 wedgewood Drive. are thoughts and prayers are with you. A great Honor and well deserved being buried at the Arlington National Cemetery.*

robert A Boyer - May 07, 2020 at 06:40 PM



“ *Adele & I were very sorry to learn Al made his last flight. While we both began flying training at Graham AB near Merianna, FL in Feb 1953 we reconnected years later through the Super Sabre Society. At our 2015 reunion we teamed up again during a memorable late night meeting & discussion with Bob Hoover. This get together is covered in detail on page 22 of The Intake, Issue 28. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. John & Adele Wagner*



John L. Wagner - May 01, 2020 at 02:02 PM

KS

“ Although I met Al late in life(January 6, 2020) we hit it off immediately. I came to visit him as often as I could, and as a fellow pilot (USN) we never failed to share a story or two about funny events that influenced our careers. When Al told me about his book, I couldn't wait to get my hands on a copy and read it! As you would expect, we talked about flying and different aircraft performances; and sometimes we even spent time dog-fighting our watches. We talked and talked about the parallels that our lives took. But, we never failed to take some time to talk about our families.

Marion, Al always called you "the perfect Air Force Officer's Wife" and spoke so lovingly about you. Every time I met Al, you were there by his side. Always supportive to the end. Al was one of the finest men I have ever had the privilege of meeting. I shall miss him.

Ken Smith
Lcdr USN(Ret)
Capt AAL(Ret)
Hospice Vet-to-Vet Volunteer

Kenneth A Smith - April 30, 2020 at 12:54 PM

LF

Marion, it is October 30, 2020 and I am just now learning about Al's passing. I have missed your Christmas letters and I understand why. It's been 3 and a half years since Don passed. I would love to hear from you. Cards sent were returned. No address. Fondly,
Lorraine Martin

loraine martin military friend - October 30, 2020 at 05:44 PM