



## Albert Sidney Kelly

February 21, 1919 - December 14, 2010

Col. Albert S. Kelly, 91, was granted his angel wings on December 9, 2010, at Northwest Medical Center in Houston, TX. Col. Kelly was born February 21, 1919, in Huntsville, TX, to Stella Muriel Fraser and Albert S. Thompson. After graduating from high school, he attended Sam Houston State Teachers College in Huntsville, where he met his future wife of 59 years, Rheuanna Lee Long Kelly. While attending college, Col. Kelly worked as a "soda skeet" at Evans-Goolsby Drug in Huntsville. Col. Kelly went on to have a successful and colorful 30-year career in the United States Air Force. Col. Kelly first joined the National Guard in 1937. He then joined the U. S. Army Air Corps (now the U. S. Air Force) in 1940. After graduating from flying school as a 2nd Lt., Col. Kelly was assigned to Luke Air Force Base in Phoenix, AZ, as a flight instructor. For the next few years, he trained Chinese cadets as fighter pilots. During World War II, he was assigned to the European Theater of Operations, principally flying out of Sicily and Italy. He flew P-51 Mustang fighters against the Luftwaffe and participated in providing fighter escort cover for President Roosevelt and his party to Russia to discuss treaty arrangements with Josef Stalin. After World War II, Col. Kelly was stationed at the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, flying P-38 and P-51 fighters. In 1947, he led the first flight of jet fighters (P-80 Shooting Stars) to the Alaskan Air Command. After his Alaskan tour, Col. Kelly was stationed at Selfridge Air Force Base in Michigan. From there, he served in Korea in the Korean Conflict, where, at the age of 31, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel. He commanded one of only two F-86

Sabrejet Fighter Groups. Col. Kelly flew 186 fighter missions in Korea and shot down 4.5 Russian MIGs which, combined with his World War II victories, classified him as an Ace. From 1959 through 1962, Col. Kelly served with the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Paris, France. He was then stationed at Headquarters Tactical Air Command, in Langley, VA, as Director of War Plans during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Col. Kelly retired from the Air Force in November 1967, after 30 years of military service. Some of his awards during that time include: 2 Distinguished Flying Crosses; 3 United States Legions of Merit; the Bronze Star with Cross for Valor; 13 Air Medals; 3 Commendation medals; 4 Presidential Unit Citations; and the Korean decoration, the Order of the Ulchi, which was personally awarded by the then president of Korea, Singman Rhee. Col. Kelly lived in Albuquerque, NM, after retiring from the military. In 1978, he moved back to Huntsville, where he worked another 20 years as a realtor. Col. Kelly is survived by his sister Helen Thompson Webb; daughter Karen Ann Kelly; daughter Sandra Kelly Mills, and her spouse Charles; and granddaughter Stephani Kelly Mills. He was preceded in death by his wife Rheuanna Lee Long Kelly; and sister Evelyn Thompson Knighton. A funeral service will be held at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home Chapel, 1700 Normal Park, Huntsville, TX, on Tuesday, December 14, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. Visitation will be immediately prior to the service, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Col. Kelly will be interred at the Arlington National Cemetery. Memorial contributions should be sent in honor of Col. Albert S. Kelly to First United Methodist Church of Huntsville, 1016 Sam Houston Avenue, Huntsville, TX 77340; or to Hearts Veterans Museum of Texas, 463 SH 75 North, Huntsville, TX 77320.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Albert Sidney Kelly*

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November 15, 2022 at 08:33 PM



“ *Kay, I have so many fond memories of your dad, especially my visit to D.C. back in 1964 and all the times we spent at your grandmother's house in Huntsville. My heartfelt sympathy. Joan*

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**Joan Anderson** - December 12, 2010 at 04:44 PM



“ *Karen and Sandy,  
There just aren't words to tell you both how sad I am at hearing of Kelly's passing. Your dad was one of a kind and I loved him just like he was family. Cherish your memories and know how fortunate that you were to have him as your father.*

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**Wendy Drake** - December 12, 2010 at 01:13 PM



“ *May you go in Peace, Colonel! I was fortunate enough to meet this amazing person while I was the SHSU Alumni Director. What a brilliant person he was! My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Norma Dell Jones of Lovelady, Texas.*

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**Norma Dell Jones** - December 11, 2010 at 11:02 PM