



Francis Edward Hawke

March 11, 1923 - June 27, 2021

Francis Edward 'Babe' Hawke

"Trust in the Lord and Do Good"

Psalm 37:3

No one heeded the Psalmist like Babe Hawke.

Babe went to the Lord at 7:30 P.M., June 27, 2021, 74 years to the hour after marrying his wife and best friend Avonelle.

Babe was the son and grandson of pioneers,
Husband to an angel and a living saint,
Father of four children, three who survive him,
Grandfather of five,
Great grandfather of two,
Friend, mentor and comforter to countless,
Lover of dogs,
Servant to a great nation in its time of greatest need,
Above all, servant to his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Babe traveled the world, always with Arizona in his heart and the Sonoran Desert in his blood.

The son of George T. Hawke, Jr., and Anita Alice Francis Hawke, Babe was born on March 11, 1923, in Tucson, the third of three sons. His older brothers were George Herbert Hawke and Thomas Edwin Hawke. The family lived at 934 E. 7th St., just West of Park Ave., in a house built by Babe's uncle Dan Brewster.

Babe attended Tucson High School, where he was Student Body President and Drum Major of the Marching Band. These accolades pale in comparison to the seminal event of

his life, which also took place at this time: he met and fell in love with Irene Avonelle Johnson.

Babe attended the University of Arizona, where he majored in music and physical education. He was an avid participant in intramural sports, especially boxing, in which, unbeknownst to his mother, he was undefeated. Babe also participated in Sr. ROTC as a horse cavalryman.

Pearl Harbor changed both the world and Babe's life-trajectory.

1944 found Babe at Ft. Riley, Kansas in horse cavalry basic training, preparing to go to war. Horses not being the preferred weapon of war by this time, he chose to enter the new Army Air Corps, which shipped him off to Santa Ana, California for navigator training. Not long after, he found himself in Italy, leading squadrons of B-24 Liberators to their targets behind German lines. In the course of 23 missions, his planes were shot down twice, once forcing a distressed landing behind enemy lines and exfiltration under duress.

After helping to defeat European Fascism, Babe chose to stay in the newly constituted United States Air Force in order to fight Soviet-led Communism. In 1947 he was in pilot school at Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas, where Avonelle joined him. There they married on June 27th of that year.

Now a pilot in the Strategic Air Command (SAC), in the first of many firsts, Babe's squadron was chosen to pioneer air-refueling technology. Working virtually round-the-clock, his crew and their colleagues developed the equipment and techniques to refuel a B-50 heavy bomber in-flight, thus permitting U.S. bombers to attack Soviet targets and return safely to U.S. soil without landing. This made the U.S. bomber force truly strategic in nature. In February 1949 his crew was chosen to be the first ever to attempt to fly around the world non-stop, taking off from Carswell Air Force Base in Texas.

The next 'first' was selection to the very first cohort of 'weaponeers', all pilots, who were trained to arm an atom bomb on board a bomber that was enroute to its target. Not long after, Babe and Avonelle and their three young boys moved to Sidi Slimane Air Force Base near Sidi Yahia, Morocco, where Babe was lead weaponeer in the Middle East Theater.

This led to his assignment in 1959 to the Joint Strategic Target Planning Group at SAC Headquarters, Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska. There he participated in the formulation of the 'first' ever Single Integrated Operations Plan (SIOP), AKA 'nuclear war

plan', which coordinated the use of all U.S. nuclear weapons in the event of all-out war. Once the SIOP was in place and operational, Babe's task was to ensure that the proper weapons systems were in the right place and matched with the appropriate delivery systems, all in proper working order, to implement the SIOP at a moment's notice. It was during this period that the Cuban Missile Crisis occurred, during which Babe and his colleagues were ensconced in the underground command center at SAC HQ, adjusting the SIOP and briefing their superiors at The Pentagon accordingly.

In 1963, now Lt. Col. Babe Hawke was assigned to be the 'first' commander of the 31st Munitions Maintenance Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson. The squadron's responsibility was to store, maintain and safeguard the nuclear weapon payloads installed in the nose cones that sat atop the 18 Titan II missiles arrayed around Tucson.

In 1967 Babe retired from the Air Force after a distinguished career of 'firsts'. He started on horseback, a weapons system with a maximum velocity of 55 miles per hour, and ended his career managing weapons systems that traveled 16,000 miles per hour.

More details of Babe's extraordinary military career are available by going to www.youtube.com and searching: Lt Col Francis E "Babe" Hawke Military History

After retiring from the Air Force, Babe went to work for Sears Roebuck, managing Sears' warehouse, delivery and installation operations in southern Arizona. After Sears, Babe worked plant maintenance at the University of Arizona before retiring for good in the mid-80s.

Babe and Avonelle continued to live in Tucson after his full retirement. They were active in their church, in Bible Study Fellowship and as docents for the University of Arizona. Babe was active in Gideons International and enjoyed researching his family's genealogy. They traveled extensively, including to China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Hong Kong, The Philippines and Singapore, Australia and throughout the British Isles. In his later years, Babe most enjoyed being around his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, all of whom adore him. The adage, "He never met a stranger" fit Babe to a T.

Babe is survived by his wife of 74 years Irene Avonelle Johnson Hawke of Tucson, AZ.; children Michael Francis Hawke and his wife Laurie McEdwards Hawke of Happy Jack, AZ; George Thomas Hawke of Tucson, AZ; Francis Edward Hawke, Jr. and his wife Elise Gao of Henderson, NV; grandchildren Laurie Kathleen Hawke Goodman and her husband Peter Goodman of Prescott Valley, AZ; Michael Francis Hawke II and his wife Deanna

Hawke of Ft. Worth, TX; Degas Magdalena Lopez of Tucson, AZ; Aaron Francis Hawke and his wife Jennifer Hawke of Corona, CA; Ray Jin of Beijing, China; great grandchildren Warwick Francis Hawke Goodman of Prescott Valley, AZ; and Evelyn Skye Hawke of Ft. Worth, Tx.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

2 Timothy 4:7

Events

JUL **Graveside Service** 09:00AM
2
Evergreen Cemetery
3015 North Oracle Road, Tucson, AZ, US, 85705

Comments



“ 2 files added to the album Babe's funeral



Frank Hawke - July 19, 2021 at 01:18 AM

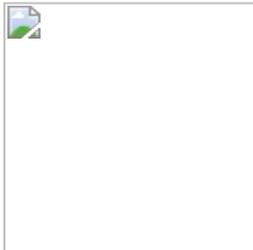


“ "And when you want to say I love you, say 我爱你....."

Frank Hawke - July 19, 2021 at 01:16 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Babe's funeral



Frank Hawke - July 03, 2021 at 11:14 AM



“ Dear Avonelle...God blessed our nation with Babe, a man of godly character that stood with courage to serve our country and most of all his LORD and SAVIOR. We are blessed to have known you both. Love Marty & Cindy

Cindy Neuens - July 04, 2021 at 05:56 PM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Francis Edward Hawke.



July 01, 2021 at 09:09 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Francis Edward Hawke.



July 01, 2021 at 06:01 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Babe at Tucson High



Evergreen Mortuary, Cemetery & Crematory - June 30, 2021 at 06:26 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Babe & family



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 06:17 PM



“ 1 file added to the album World Travelers



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 06:15 PM



“ 2 files added to the album Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 06:07 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 06:05 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Babe at Tucsson High

Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 05:51 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Babe at Tucsson High

Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 05:48 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Babe at Tucsson High



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 05:46 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Babe & family



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 05:42 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 01:18 PM



“ Brett, Lisa, Billy and Melody Tomlinson purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Francis Edward Hawke.



Brett, Lisa, Billy and Melody Tomlinson - June 30, 2021 at 01:16 PM



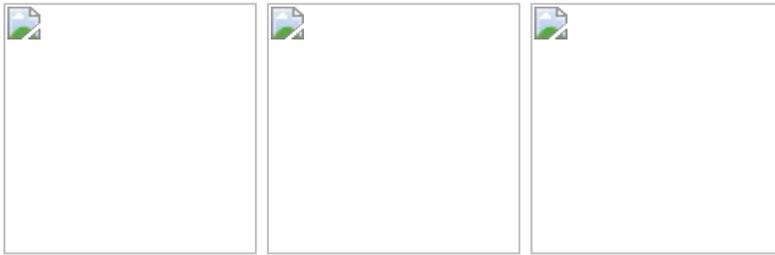
“ 3 files added to the album Babe's Extraorhttps://i.ytimg.com/vi-ZJGp2AniNY/sddefault.jpgdinary Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 12:51 PM



“ 9 files added to the album Babe's Extraorhttps://i.ytimg.com/vi-ZJGp2AniNY/sddefault.jpgdinary Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 12:32 PM



“ Love you, Dad. See you in the funny papers.

Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 12:30 PM



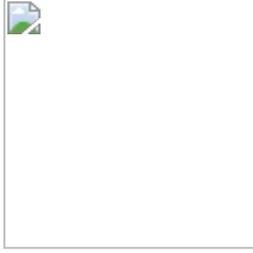
“ 1 file added to the album Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 12:10 PM



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ZJGp2AniNY/sddefault.jpgdinary Military History



Frank Hawke - June 30, 2021 at 12:05 PM