



Hugh Conklin Bell

Celebration of Life Memorial Service from
Rose Hill Cemetery
Shenandoah, Iowa
Friday, July 8, 2022
11:00 a.m.

Words of Comfort
Staci L. Shearer

Military Honors
United States Air Force Funeral Honor Detail
Shenandoah American Legion Color Guard

Memorials
Shenandoah American Legion Color Guard
People 4 Paws

Hugh C. Bell was born to Hugh McKean Bell and Ava Conklin Bell on May 6, 1924 at their home in McCook, Nebraska. Later in 1924 the family moved to Shenandoah, the hometown of Hugh's father. They resided at 500 Walnut Street where Hugh grew up and attended schools. He graduated from Shenandoah High School with the Class of 1942.

Hugh took flying lessons and was ready to take the tests for a private pilot's license, but was drafted into the United States Army on January 18, 1943. He eventually reached his goal and earned his United States Army Air Force Pilots Wings and Officers Commission on August 4, 1944. He trained pilots for overseas duties in the A-20 and A-26 light bombers and flew his new A-26 from the United States to Naples, Italy. He was assigned to the 47th Bomb Group, 84th Bomb Squadron and he and his two crewman flew 21 single plane night bombing missions over the North Apennine Mountains and Po Valley in Italy.

After WWII he became a troop carrier pilot and visited 33 countries, flew across 25 other countries and 14 seas and oceans. He was happily married in 1953-1960. After his final release from the Air Force in 1953 he became a licensed funeral director in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Arizona for over 55 years. During the years 1967-1968 he volunteered to be a civilian mortician under the Department of the Army, Mortuary Service. He was then assigned to the Air Base Saigon, Vietnam where he gave care to 836 casualties so they could be returned home for burial.

Since 1943 he has been a member of the American Legion, serving as Shenandoah Post 88 Commander, Page County Commander, 7th District Commander and Department Vice Commander. His 12 years of active and inactive Reserve Air Force service gave him the opportunity to receive the following awards; The 47th Bomber Group Unit Citation, Air Medal, Air Force Combat Ribbon, 1 start for the North Apennine Mountains Campaign, 1 star for the Po Valley Italian Campaign, WWII Victory Ribbon, German Occupation Ribbon and 9 other Air Force Service date ribbons.

Hugh was a conservative Republican and was very adamant in expressing his political views in his "Letters to the Editor." He was preceded in death by his parents and sister Evelyne Bell Henderson. He is survived by his nephew Roderick Henderson of Warwick, Rhode Island, several friends and enemies whoever they are. In true funeral director style, Hugh saw to it that his final arrangements were taken care of in advance and that he personally penned his obituary. Hugh was loved and cared for by the staff at Windsor Manor. May his soul now and forever more, rest in peace.

