



Robert Wyatt Thrasher

April 17, 2012

Robert Wyatt Thrasher, 87, passed away on April 17 at his farm on Popcorn Road. Born in Harrodsburg on September 1, 1924, to Brooks (Tony) H Thrasher and Marjorie Fowler Thrasher, he was the oldest of four children. About two years later, the family moved out to a farm on what is now called Thrasher Road. The house was previously owned by Robert's grandparents Daniel and Effie Fowler.

Robert loved to tell the story of having to work off a medical bill incurred when his sister had emergency surgery for a ruptured appendix. This happened during the depression and his family had no money to pay Dr. Poland's fee so Robert was chosen to work on the doctor's farm for the summer. What might have been a negative time turned out to be quite a pleasant experience. He had all the soda

pop
with ice that he could drink.

Because Robert showed great promise as a student, his mother sent him to Bloomington High School. He had to cut through the woods and travel on foot a great distance to reach an aunt's home on Rockport Road where he caught the bus. After receiving two double promotions and graduating at age 16, he attended Indiana University on a scholarship. But times were tough, and he left college to return to work on the family farm.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Robert volunteered for the army. He served as a scout in the 99th Division, 395th Infantry, Company L. His basic training was in Arkansas where he was sent to the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) at the University of Arkansas. Later he was stationed at Camp Maxey in Paris, Texas, and after more training, Company L was shipped to England and then to France. Robert fought in the Battle of the Bulge and also saw action at Bergheim, Remagen, the Ruhr Pocket and Gleidorf. His battalion joined

the Third Army which was commanded by General Patton. He received numerous medals including a Bronze Star, a Presidential Unit Citation, and Expert Infantry Badge, a Combat Infantry Badge, and a Belgian Fourragere. After Hitler was defeated, he anticipated being shipped immediately to fight the Japanese. Figuring he would never get to see Paris otherwise, he decided to go AWOL and visit the city. Later when he reported to his commander, he gave Robert a choice: he could be court-martialed, or he could "ship out." He chose to "ship out." Not knowing the destination, he and several others were loaded onto a truck bound for their new assignment. Imagine his reaction when he found himself back in Paris. The army was nice enough to put him up in a hotel for approximately the next six months, and he was given a tough job. What he had to do was to oversee the delivery of supplies to the numerous army headquarters in Paris. In 2007, Robert published a collection of his war memories entitled Popcorn Road to Paris...and

Back. The book would not have been possible without the extra efforts

of his daughters Carol Tolliver and Nancy Sheehy.

In 1947, he married Bessie N. Nilson, and they began their married

life in Indianapolis where he worked for General Motors. He continued

to work for GM after he and Bessie bought a house and farm in Harrodsburg. While continuing to farm, he worked other jobs including

one at Hoadley Quarry. He retired as a supervisor for the Bloomington

Post Office and one of his favorite activities while working for the

post office was to talk to school children about stamps and to

encourage stamp collecting. He had an active civic life including

service on the Monroe County School Board and the Monroe County Zoning

Board. The Governor appointed him to serve on the board of the Lake

Monroe Division of the Regional Sewer District where he remained a

member until his death.

In 1975 he visited China as part of an agricultural exchange study.

During his tour of the country he was able to visit The Great Wall, to

observe surgeries at hospitals where acupuncture was used as the only

anesthetic, and he was able to accompany a Chinese postal carrier delivering daily mail.

Surviving relatives include his wife Bessie; five daughters, Linda

Harper (John) of Carmel, IN, Jane Canter of Bloomington, Nancy Sheehy

(Bill) of Manhattan Beach, CA, Carol Tolliver (Larry) of Bloomington,

Susan Parker (Pat) of Bloomington; one son, Robert "Roby" Wyatt

Thrasher, Jr (Judy) of Springville; ten grandchildren, Daniel Harper,

Jessica Sheehy, Patrick Sheehy, Claire (Greg) Grostefon, Kyle (Amy)

Winkler, Christopher (Lupe) Thrasher, Patrick Parker, Charlie Parker,

Jessica (Dusty) Fleener, and Robert "Bobby" Wyatt Thrasher III

(Rachel); four great-grandchildren. Two sisters survive, Janice

Fidler, Bloomington, and JoAnn Sowders, Bloomington, and one brother,

Paul (Vivian) Thrasher of Bloomington. He was preceded in death by

his parents and a grandson, Mark Thrasher.

The family wishes to thank Dr Caitilin Kelly and Dr. Louis Calli for

their friendships. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to your

favorite veterans' organization or to the charity of your

choice.

A celebration of Robert's life will be held at the
Harrodsburg

Community Center on Sunday, April 22, at 2 pm. Please come with
a

story to share and for fellowship with those who loved and will
miss

him. Allen Funeral Home 4155 South Old Highway 37 is handling the
arrangements and online condolences may be sent to the family at
www.allefuneralhome.org.

Tribute Wall

TJ

“ Dear Nancy, Bessie and family

Jane and I have just heard the news about Bob's death. Our love and thoughts are with you all at this sad time.

Tim & Jane Mills-Sheehy - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM

JO

“ *It is with the deepest regret that I just heard today of the passing of Bob. He was a very fine man and he made a difference in the lives of countless people. It is a blessing that your family has each other to lean on for support, but it is an even greater blessing how Bob touched so many people.....many he never knew that he had done so. I am truly saddened by his passing, but my life feels more enriched by knowing him. Your family are in my prayers tonight. God bless all of you.*

Joe Sego - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM

JE

“ *I thoroughly enjoyed the small bit of time I spent interviewing Robert Thrasher for the HT a few years ago. I'm also the son of an US Army Scout. My dad served in a scout unit during the Vietnam War. May Thrasher rest in peace. He's served his time in hell.*

Jeremy Hogan - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM

PE

“ *My sincerest condolence to your family for the loss of your loved one...*

Peggy Gramm-Srygler - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM

K.

“ I did not know your father personally but I was touched by your heart-felt biography of his life. I would be interested in reading his book if you could please advise me as to where to purchase it in Bloomington or elsewhere.

As your families know, there are fewer and fewer WWII Vets left and they need to be recognized for their extreme war efforts. Thank you for sharing your Dad with the world. Karen Jessee

K. Jessee - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM

JO

“ Dear Bessie and Family,

I'm in Oklahoma and will not be able to attend Bob's memorial, but I wanted you to know how much I liked and respected your husband and father. He was a great colleague on the School Board and a terrific pal.

So sorry to hear of his passing,

John

John Dyson - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM

JO

“ To the Family of Bob Thrasher:

I was fortunate enough to meet Bob through the "Old Farts" venue, where he often regaled us with his insights and observations. He was always engaging, witty, and understood the human condition better than any "talking head" on the cable T-V channels.

I am saddened to see another member of the "Greatest" generation leave us. We were all blessed by his service and presence. Thank you, Bob.

Jon Stafford

Jon Stafford - March 22, 2013 at 08:17 AM