



John Paul Harper

January 3, 1924 - November 10, 2022

John Paul Harper, 98, of West Point, VA died at home on November 10, 2022. The son of Samuel Paul and Clara Harper of Andrews, SC he was preceded in death by his wife of 67 years, Jacqueline Cook Harper. Mr. Harper is beloved by four children: Virginia Hester (Michael Hicks) of Columbia, SC; John (Eleanor) of West Point; Paul (Elizabeth) of Raleigh, NC; Nora Kopacki (Steve) of Poquoson; seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. John Paul was the last surviving sibling of sisters Sarah Bailey and Mary Harper and brothers, Samuel Robert and Keith Harper.

WWII Veteran and POW, Mr. Harper served as a B-24 nose gunner in the US 8th Air Force in North Pickenham, England, in the 492nd bomb group. Shot down over Germany August 4, 1944 he was captured and interred in Stalag Luft IV in Poland. On February 6, 1945 he and other prisoners were forced to walk for 80 days in the coldest winter on record. They traversed more than five hundred miles from the Baltic Sea to southwest of Berlin before being liberated by Patton's 104th Timberwolf Division on April 26, 1945. In later life, he was able to share his history and experiences with more than 50 school classes, civic groups, clubs and church groups. He enjoyed many annual reunions with members of the 492nd, with whom he developed close relationships over the years.

Mr. Harper was a graduate of North Carolina State College in 1949, when he

began his 40-year forestry career in Georgetown, SC with International Paper Company and later with Great Northern Paper in Blakely, GA. He then moved to Chesapeake Corporation in West Point, VA in 1968 where he retired as a Vice President in 1989.

An avid fisherman, hunter and golfer, when those hobbies were no longer possible due to loss of vision, he took up walking around his neighborhood and visiting with friends.

He was a member of the Society of American Foresters for more than 60 years. Mr. Harper was a member of West Point United Methodist Church. The family extends its sincere gratitude to Amedisys Hospice and Bayada Home Health Care for their care and support, and to the many friends and neighbors who supported him.

A visitation will be held from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, November 18th at Vincent Funeral Home, 417 11th St., West Point, VA. A memorial service at West Point United Methodist Church, 1020 Main St., will be held 2 pm, Saturday November 19th. The service will be live-streamed through the West Point UMC Facebook page.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to West Point Historical Society, P.O. Box 1556, West Point, Va 23181, or the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, mightyeighth.org.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **18**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Vincent Funeral Home, West Point Chapel
417 11th St
West Point, VA 23181
(804) 843-2550

Memorial Service

NOV **19**. 2:00 PM (ET)

West Point United Methodist Church
1020 Main Street
West Point, VA 23181

Tribute Wall

JR

“ *John And Vickie Roane lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



John and Vickie Roane - November 28, 2022 at 01:12 PM

CP

“ *God bless the family.*



Curtis Powers - November 23, 2022 at 10:21 PM

AW

“ *Avril & Gerald Williams lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



Avril & Gerald Williams - November 19, 2022 at 09:58 AM

SP

“ *Sue & Doug Perry lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



Sue & Doug Perry - November 18, 2022 at 12:43 AM

VB

“ *John and Eleanor: We are so sorry to hear of the passing of your father/father-in-law. You are in our thoughts and prayers.*
Vic and Sharon Britton

Vic and Sharon Britton - November 16, 2022 at 04:55 PM



“ *The members of VFW Melvin Rosson Post 8356 would like to send our deepest sympathy to Mr. Harper's family. We are so proud of his service in the Air force and his contributions to the community and were honored to have him as a member of our Post. He touched so many people's lives and they will have many wonderful memories to remember him by. Please know that we share in your sorrow.*



Jack Borinski - November 16, 2022 at 12:57 PM

TG

“ *Temple Garnett-Burton lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



Temple Garnett-Burton - November 16, 2022 at 12:12 PM

NA

“ *On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the staff and volunteers of the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force, we would like to extend our deepest condolences for your loss. Please know the passing of your loved one is felt by all those who honor the Greatest Generation and their sacrifices.*

National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air - November 14, 2022 at 02:44 PM

VA

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.*

Virginia&Will Addison - November 14, 2022 at 09:46 AM

LS

“ *Many fond memories of working with Mr Harper in the Woodlands Department at Chesapeake Corporation, a true gentleman and friend. Condolences to his family. 💔*



Linda South - November 13, 2022 at 06:46 PM

 Faith Silva

“ *Faith Silva lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



Faith Silva - November 13, 2022 at 08:35 AM

RC

“ *R.T. Croswell And Donna Croswell lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



R.T. Croswell and Donna Croswell - November 13, 2022 at 06:04 AM

TB

“ Will always have fond and positive memories of Mr. Harper. A true Southern gentleman with a wry wit. He was a real competitor on the golf course and always willing to give a tip for improvement! At the same time, he was reluctant to talk about his many achievements and sacrifices during the War and after. A proud but humble man. We can all learn from his example.
Strength to the family as they deal with a big and irreplaceable loss.

*Tim Brown
Friend and neighbor*

Timothy Brown - November 12, 2022 at 05:19 PM

TG

“ Tina And Desi Gulley lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper



tina and desi gulley - November 12, 2022 at 10:09 AM

JR

“ John And Vickie Roane lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper



John and Vickie Roane - November 12, 2022 at 08:48 AM

JD

“ *John, Eleanor and Family: Mr. Harper was a true gentleman. May your memories help comfort you in your loss. Our thoughts and prayer are with you and your family. Sincerely, Lee and John Davis*

John Davis - November 11, 2022 at 06:46 PM



“ *Margaret Ogg lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



Margaret Ogg - November 11, 2022 at 05:29 PM

PA

“ *Paula Armstead*

I cut his hair for many years he was fine gentleman he will be missed.

Paula Armstead - November 11, 2022 at 04:30 PM

WG

True Paul was great guy always had good word for everyone he will truly missed Bill & Grace

WILLS Grace - November 12, 2022 at 10:54 AM

PA

“ *Paula Armstead lit a candle in memory of John Paul Harper*



Paula Armstead - November 11, 2022 at 04:27 PM

GC

“ I had the honor of working with Mr. Harper at the Chesapeake Corp. in the Woodlands Dept. where I paid for the wood. The last time I saw him he told me he could always count on me to get him the information and figures he needed for his reports. I will always remember him and what a nice gentleman he was.
With heartfelt sympathy,
Gloria Couch (formerly Foster)



Gloria Couch - November 11, 2022 at 04:22 PM

JP

“ Mr Harper was a fine Southern gentleman. I was blessed to be able to work with him in the Woodlands Division at Chesapeake. I will really miss him. Glenn and I send our love and sympathy to all of his family.

Judy & Glenn Palmer - November 11, 2022 at 03:47 PM