

Link Lockett, 90, of Springdale Arkansas, passed away on Wednesday, April 25, 2018. He was surrounded by loving family. Link was born January 15, 1928 in Fayetteville, AR. He was preceded in death by his parents, H.W and Hattye Lockett; first wife, Patricia; his daughter, Laura Lee; and his brother, Wade S. Lockett. Link attended the University of Arkansas before enrolling in ROTC in 1951, where he was assigned to the Signal Corps. He went on to train in Army Aviation School and Army Flight School. He served in Japan and Korea, receiving a WWII VIC Medal, Korean Service Medal and Aviation Wings, among other medals. He was discharged as a First Lieutenant in 1955. Link had a deep love for helicopters. He began practice flying a WWII biplane at age 14 and received his student pilot's license at age 16. After his service, he continued his helicopter piloting career in Louisiana flying for oil companies, before moving his family to Alaska in 1957 to start his Helicopter charter business, Hill-ICopters, Inc. There, he owned and operated the Hiller 12-e, the most advanced helicopter model available to civilian operators at the time. In May of 1960, Link was among the volunteers attempting to rescue of a group of stranded and injured mountain climbers on Mt. McKinley. He stripped his helicopter (altitude ceiling of 16,000 feet) to a shell, even the battery went once the motor was started. He rescued John Day and Peter Schoening at 17,300 feet, higher than any aircraft had ever landed and taken off from before. He was awarded the Carnegie Medal for Heroism as well as the Frederick L. Fienberg Award for demonstrating outstanding skills or achievement in a vertical flight aircraft. In 1961, Link was contracted to USGS and Aramco mapping areal geology in Saudi Arabia. From 1962 to 1975 he flew for Air America in Southeast Asia, providing direct and indirect support to US Special Forces, later providing logistics and transportation support during the Vietnam War. He remained in Southeast Asia after leaving Air America, eventually landing in Indonesia and retiring there until 2013 when he and his wife returned to Arkansas. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Ulif; son, Wade; daughter, Linda, husband Roger. 4 grandchildren; Laura Wilson, husband Frank, Michael Lockett, wife Jessica, Amy Lightfoot, husband Stephen, and Lake Lockett; their mother Donna Lockett; and 4 great grandchildren; Autumn, Dominic, Railey and Mila Kay. The family is requesting that expressions of condolence be gifted to our local Circle of Life hospices.