



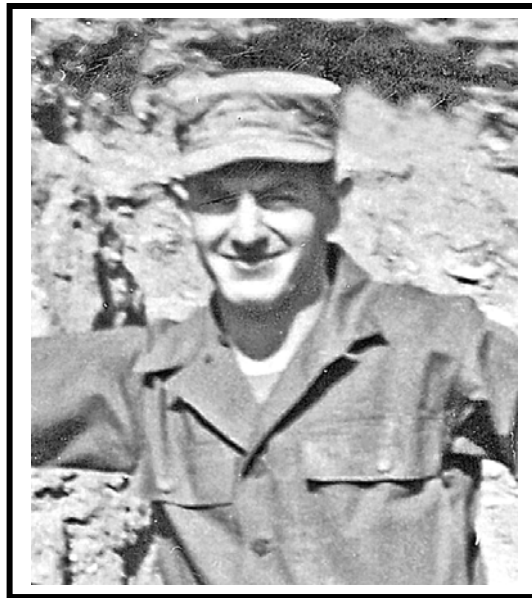
National Defense Service Medal



Good Conduct Medal



Mark 6 Mod 0 A-Bomb Case



**Benjamin Richard Blattenberger**  
**Airman 1/C U.S. Air Force**  
**31 August 1951 – 30 May 1955**



Dick at Sandia Base  
Albuquerque, New Mexico



Dick & June Blattenberger  
Circa 2006

Benjamin “Dick” was born on 9 September 1930 in Bedford, Pennsylvania. He attended grades 1–6 at Bedford Elementary School. In 1942, he and his younger sister, Jean, were placed in the Methodist Home for Children in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Mechanicsburg High School in 1948. He then attended Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, for a year, after which he transferred to Kutztown State Teachers College in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, for two years. Dick then enlisted in the Air Force on 31 August 1951 at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and completed basic training at Sampson Air Force Base, Geneva, New York. After his basic training, he was assigned to Sandia Base at Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he was granted a Top Secret “Q” Clearance to be trained for final assembly of the Mk6 – Mod “0” atomic bomb in the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project (AFSWP), which was a continuation of the “Manhattan Project.” Upon completion of this training, he was transferred to Development Division, Headquarters Field Command, AFSWP, where he worked as a Technical Illustrator and Draftsman for the Hydrogen Bomb and other latest Top Secret weapons. During this time, he applied for and was found fully qualified for Officer Candidate School (OCS). He was selected for one of two OCS classes in 1952, but the classes were cancelled due to an excess of officers commissioned from the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps and other officer programs. In the meantime, Dick married **June Arduth Grim** on 18 January 1953 in Kutztown while on leave from Sandia. He continued to serve at Sandia until he was released from active duty on 30 May 1955 under an early release program to finish college. For his service in the Air Force, he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. He graduated from Kutztown State College in 1956 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Art Education, and later was on the faculty there during 1972 and 1973. The family moved to Brookdale, Pennsylvania, in Lower Macungie Township, and Dick joined Lieberman-Appalucci Advertising in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where he worked from 1956 to 1991 as a Commercial Artist and Art Director. He and June have three children: **Lucinda**, **Dale**, and **Robin**. Dick’s hobby is bluegrass music. He taught himself to play the Dobro resonator guitar and played with several local bands and, lastly, with “The Kings Countrymen” from 1972 to 1974 – a Gospel bluegrass band. They produced seven long-playing (LP) record albums and played mostly throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania and neighboring states. Dick taught numerous people to play the Dobro and repaired many instruments. He jokingly says his “two claims to fame” did not involve his playing, but doing emergency field repairs on the famous old Dobro with the late Lester Flatt’s Band in 1974, and doing the design and art work for Jerry Douglas’s second LP album in 1983. He might add a third claim! In July 2010, Dick received a “Lifetime Achievement Award” which was presented to him at the Greater Lehigh Valley Bluegrass Festival.

