

Bill DeBerry Funeral Directors

Robert Lee Walston

(November 28, 1924 - October 26, 2013)

Robert Lee (Bob) Walston died Saturday, October 26, 2013 at home in Denton, Texas. He was born on November 28, 1924 and married Ruth Long Walston in 1947.

Bob Walston was born in Italy, Texas the eldest son of two. His mother, Ola Walston, was a very strong figure in his life providing emphasis on faith, education and a strong work ethic.



In December of 1942, while a sophomore in college, Bob volunteered for the Army Air Corps. He was selected for the Aviation Cadet Program, completed training and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant - Navigator. In June, 1944 he was assigned to a crew, picked up a new B-17 in Georgia and flew to Bari, Italy where he joined the 20th Bomb Squadron of the 2nd Bomb Group of the 15th Air Force. In 1944 and 1945 he flew 35 missions over enemy targets in Northern Europe including the North Apennines, Po Valley, the Balkans, Rhineland, Rome and Arno. He was shot down twice, the first in December 1944 and the second a few months later. He was named Squadron Navigator and became responsible for delivering 27 B-17s to their targets and back to base. Robert Lee Walston was among the most highly decorated AAC officers of World War II receiving among other honors, the Distinguished Flying Cross with an Oak Leaf Cluster, the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and 6 Bronze Stars.

He returned home in 1945 to the AAC training facility in Santa Ana, CA where he trained navigators until his honorable discharge in November 1945. After the war, Bob completed college at North Texas State College where he met Ruth Long Walston (one of his professors). They married on February 14, 1947 at the Little Chapel in the Woods, Denton, Texas. Bob was called to service again in 1951. As a Captain in the United States Air Force he was on active duty during the Korean Conflict until November 1952.

Bob's professional career was marked by consistent innovation and success in the sales and marketing field and related statistical research. He was part of pioneering work that established connections between businesses and academic research at the University of Illinois. He would ultimately spend 30 years in the agriculture

industry where he became the CEO of two growing companies and then he would spend another decade advising large public companies on bio technology, market positioning and valuation in a rapidly consolidating agri-tech industry. Bob also gave back to the community and his industry. He was active in his church and worked tirelessly in the Future Farmers of America organization for many years - ultimately becoming the Chairman of its Sponsoring Committee in 1974.

Robert Lee is survived by his wife of 66 years Ruth Long Walston, daughter Martha Ruth Walston, brother D. Walston, sister-in-law Beryle Walston who reside in Denton, Texas. Bob's son Robert Thomas Walston, daughter-in-law Laura Stone Walston and grandchildren Sarah Ruth Walston and Nathan Lee Walston reside in Beverly Hills, California.

The family would like to express its heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the loving care given by the hospice team during Bob's last weeks and also to the staff and members of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church for their concern, prayers and support. A celebration of Bob's life will be held on Tuesday, October 29, 2013 at 2:00 pm at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 300 West Oak Street, Denton, Texas. A reception will follow the service in the Narthex.