



Bob Heatley

December 9, 1924 - January 4, 2024

THIS IS YOUR LIFE with Bob Heatley

Written in: Voice of Vitality MARCH 2023

If you've been around Monterey for any amount of time, you've likely met or heard of Bob Heatley. He's a man of many talents and even more stories from a life lived to its fullest. At 98 years old, Bob is an experienced pilot, successful engineer and an artist whose gifts cover everything from painting to writing and music. But, when prodded to choose a favorite hobby, he responds "Flying has always been my thing."

Born in early December of 1924, Bob grew up in the southwestern Oklahoma town of Hobart. He was a curious and adventurous boy. He took his first plane ride at just five years old, and that was all it took. He suddenly had the itch to soar the skies and began flying lessons as soon as he turned 14.

By the time he was 19, he'd been flying for years and attended the Oklahoma Military Academy. He enrolled at OU, but with World War II going on, he dropped out and requested an active duty assignment. With imperfect vision, the U.S. military would not allow Bob to pilot its planes. So, he joined the Army, rising to the rank of Master Sergeant. He served in tank divisions during World War II and the Korean War. While in Italy during World War II, Bob badly injured his back carrying artillery. He continued carrying that artillery despite the pain. "It hurt, but we did it." Heatley says. "It had to be done." Bob is the epitome of a self-made man. Despite not having completed a

college degree, he went on to become a glider pilot, to design and build aircraft, operate his own aviation manufacturing company, and even help design the current Air Force One. He also worked on the design for NASA's Apollo mission and eventually moved into the oil business where he designed drilling equipment. Some of his designs are still in use today.

By the time he was 65, Bob was looking for more adventure, so he took up sailing. He's sailed America's Cup winners several times off Saint Maarten in the Caribbean.

For many years, he had a large bluewater sailboat called "Ebb Tide" on Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City. His reputation in the sailing community is such that only five years ago, he was invited to sail in a competition on Lake Michigan. He declined, having sold the "Ebb Tide" before moving to Montereau.

Bob met his late wife, Irene, during World War II while they were both serving in Italy. She was in the British Army and the two married in England when he managed to secure two weeks of leave. They shared two daughters, Margaret and B.J., three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Margaret, who lives in the Tulsa area, first introduced Bob to Montereau 11 years ago. "I walked in and I knew this was where I wanted to live the rest of my life" says Heatley.

He hasn't slowed down a bit since then. Bob is still active in the community.

He's written three plays, sung in the choir and even plays the coronet.

Currently, Bob is working on a painting of a Scottish Highlander called "The Jacobite." You might catch a glimpse of it in progress at the Studio de Monet.

And be sure to let him bend your ear with a captivating story or two.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 11. 10:00 AM (CT)

Asbury Church
6767 S Mingo Rd
Tulsa, OK 74133
(918) 492-1771

Tribute Wall

LB

“ I interviewed Bob when he was living at Montereau. His story about the tank battle in WW II was very compelling.He was painting a large portrait and I can't remember the subject of the painting. His oral history can be heard on the website of the Tulsa Historical Society and Museum.

Lorretta Bertalot - February 18, 2025 at 10:57 PM



“ Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Bob Heatley.



January 10, 2024 at 11:18 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Bob Heatley.



January 10, 2024 at 09:46 AM



“ Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Bob Heatley.



January 10, 2024 at 09:38 AM

RF

“ Redwine Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bob Heatley.

Redwine Family - January 10, 2024 at 09:38 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Bob Heatley.



January 06, 2024 at 07:51 PM

HH

“ It is our honor and privilege to serve the Heatley family and to provide this permanent tribute website in memory of Robert.



Hayhurst Funeral Home - January 04, 2024 at 09:18 AM