

Henry Allen Wakefield

1917 - 2014



Henry Allen Wakefield, a long time Ponca City resident, passed away in Claremore, on Friday, June 20, 2014.

Allen was born in Hugo, Colo., on Dec. 26, 1917. His parents were William Antony Wakefield and Elizabeth Ballentyne Wakefield. The family lived on a homestead at that time. Allen was the oldest of four boys. All of the Wakefield brothers enlisted in the U.S. Navy at the beginning of WWII. One of his younger brothers, Jim, was a pilot and was killed during the war. Allen served as a radar instructor in Corpus Christi, Texas during his enlistment.

Times were difficult for the Wakefield family; the boys all worked to help support the family. Following high school graduation in Limon, Colo., Allen worked as a supply sergeant with the Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado and then left to attend Illinois Institute of Technology. He worked as a radio repairman for several businesses in Kansas and Colorado prior to purchasing a radio store in Brush, Colo. On the return trip to Denver, after closing on the purchase of that store, the announcement came on the car radio that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. He stated to his wife, Margaret, that he would have to sell the store and enlist in the service.

Allen had married his high school sweetheart, Margaret Catherine Fleming on Sept. 1, 1940. They were married almost 50 years until Margaret's death in May of 1990. Allen married Elaine Askey in March of 1991.

After the war, Allen and his brothers took advantage of the GI Bill to gain an education. Allen graduated from the University of Colorado in August 1949 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering. He was then employed by Continental Oil Company in the Geophysics section of the Exploration Department.

Following early retirement from Conoco, Al assumed the office of vice president and later president of Pelton Company. He retired in 1994

In 1962, he was able to finally participate in a long time goal of flying. It became a real life passion and he did it with precision. He was instrument rated and had a cockpit that was well equipped with current avionics. He logged more than 3,000 hours and flew in 48 states and to several places in Canada including Calgary. The last plane that he flew was a Mooney. He very reluctantly gave it up the same time that he retired from Pelton Co.

He was active in the Geophysical Society of Tulsa where he held offices of second vice president and also president. In addition he belonged to the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG) where he received recognition in 2011 for continuous membership and support of the organization for over 60 continuous years. Allen was also a member of

Henry Allen Wakefield

1917 - 2014

the European Association of Exploration Geophysicists as well as the Canadian Society of Exploration Geophysicists.

Allen would be pleased to know how much he was respected. He was always a stickler for ethics and doing "the right thing". He stressed the importance of responsibility, accountability and of course, accomplishments. He was a proud man and for the most part, very unassuming.

He was preceded in death by wives, Margaret and Elaine; a son, James Allen; two brothers, Jim and Paul and also his parents.

Survivors are daughters, Judith Sanfilippo of Hartwell, Ga. and Karen Wakefield, of Houston, Texas; a brother, Max Wakefield, of New Jersey. In addition he is survived by seven grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and 18 nieces and nephews. At his request, no service will be held.