

## **Robert Charles Messersmith**

Robert Charles Messersmith, Sr. honored father, devoted husband, consummate architect, and treasured friend, passed away in his home on Wednesday, Nov. 7, 2007. He was 82 years old. He left his family with lasting memories of a beloved patriarch. He left his community a better place for his leadership and professionalism.



Born Aug. 14, 1925, in Fort Worth, to Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Messersmith, Sr. Bob attended Fort Worth public schools until the family moved to Chicago in 1940. He graduated from Calumet High School in 1942, and returned to Texas to study architecture at Texas Tech. Architecture school was interrupted in 1944, when he enlisted in the Army and volunteered for the 82nd Airborne Division. He saw combat duty for five months in Europe and was discharged in June 1946. Six days later, he married his childhood sweetheart, Dorothy Loafman, in Fort Worth. In 1947, Bob and Dorothy moved to Lubbock where he continued his architectural studies at Texas Tech. Upon his graduation in 1952, the couple decided to remain in Lubbock for Bob's apprenticeship training.

He started his first practice of architecture in 1955 with Marvin Stiles and Evan Roberts. In 1977, Bob formed Robert Messersmith & Associates, with offices in Lubbock and Midland. The firm became MWM Architects, Inc. in 1981, with Bob, Jeff Whitaker and David Messersmith as principals.

Bob's firms participated in the design and construction of hundreds of building projects from the Rio Grande Valley to Colorado, in particular, many on the Texas Tech campus - University buildings including The University Museum, athletic facilities including additions to Jones Stadium, dormitories including the Wiggins Complex. Bob's office also provided architectural services for more than 30 projects for United Supermarkets over the past 18 years including six Market Street stores in Wichita Falls, Amarillo, Lubbock and the DFW metroplex.

Other projects by MWM include Master Plan and Phase I for Indiana Avenue Baptist Church, Christian Life Center for First United Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church in Plainview, Master Plan and Sanctuary for St. Elizabeth University Parish, Lubbock,

Bob was a consummate professional - a respected architect throughout Texas. His professional accomplishments included terms as President of the Lubbock Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and two terms as Treasurer of the Texas Society of

Architects. In 1983 he was selected by the College of Architecture at Texas Tech University as its first Distinguished Alumnus. He regarded this as one of his most prestigious honors.

Among his civic and community accomplishments was service as Vice Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Commission to advise the City of Lubbock what actions should be taken after the 1970 tornado. The recommendations of this commission led to the passage of two bond elections which provided for the construction of the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center, the Canyon Lakes, and the renewal of the downtown area. Bob also served as President of the Board of Directors of the ABC Boy's Club and was a member of the Lubbock Urban Renewal Board.

Bob's love of architecture and Texas Tech and his contributions to the profession of architecture were exemplified by the establishment in 2003, of the Robert and Dorothy Messersmith Scholarship in Architecture, for deserving students in the Texas Tech College of Architecture. Bob and Dorothy reveled in meeting the recipients and encouraging them in their budding careers.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, the effervescent Dorothy; and three brothers, Frank Jr. of Whittier, Calif., Marvin of Fort Worth, and Larry of Fort Worth. He is survived by son, David Messersmith and wife Leanne of Dallas; daughter, Carol Livingston and husband Bob of Lubbock; son, Gary Messersmith and wife Kelly of Shallowater; son, Robert, Jr., of Austin; sister-in-law, Carol Thornton and husband Bob of Weatherford; niece, Jamie Thornton of Weatherford; grandchildren, Patrick Messersmith and Kristi Le of Abilene, Ashley Messersmith, Andrew Livingston, Megan Messersmith, and Chase Messersmith; and a two week old great grandson, Connor Robert Messersmith of Abilene.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial gifts be directed to Hospice of Lubbock or to the Texas Tech Foundation: Robert and Dorothy Messersmith Scholarship in Architecture.

The family will receive friends at Resthaven Funeral Home on Friday, Nov. 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Graveside services will be at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 10, 2007, at Resthaven Memorial Park. Memorial, services will be 2 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 11, 2007, at the Hodges Chapel at First Christian Church, with Dr. Michael Passmore and Rev. Elizabeth Abraham officiating.