

Sam R. Webb

Friday, October 10, 2008



Albany

Sam Richard Webb, a native and beloved longtime resident of Albany, Texas, died Thursday. He was 95. Before his death, he was believed to be the oldest living graduate of Albany High School.

He and Ellen were married for nearly 57 years. He was the patriarch of four generations of the Webb family, extending from Texas to Hawaii.

Sam, son of William Graham Webb and May Vernon Webb, was named for his grandfather, who moved to Albany in 1883 and founded the Webb and Webb insurance firm, which Sam operated until his retirement in 1990. Six generations of Sam's family have lived in Albany.

He was a fervent but quiet leader of Matthews Memorial Presbyterian Church, serving for many years as a Sunday school teacher and superintendent, deacon, elder, youth director and grounds keeper. He also played Santa Claus at the church for many years. He was devoted to the Fort Griffin Fandangle, the American Legion Hall, and the annual Memorial Day service, which he helped plan for many years. He was active in the Robert Nail Scholarship Fund, cared for the Ledbetter Picket House for many years and portrayed Joseph in the Albany Christmas Nativity for almost 50 years.

Sam received many honors through the years, including the Albany Chamber of Commerce Cornerstone Award in 1981 and the National DAR Medal of Honor in 1989. He was honored by his church in 1994 for his years of service. He and Ellen were honored by the Fort Griffin Fandangle in 1999 for their service and dedication.

When Sam would meet people for the first time, invariably he would try to find out if they had any connection to Albany. Even though he lived in Abilene in his latter years for health reasons, his heart always resided in Albany.

People who knew Sam Webb considered him one of the kindest, nicest, most honest and decent and truly devout people they had ever met. When he would pray, which he did up to his final days, he would express thanks for God's grace, for America, and for his family.

Sam was an Army veteran of World War II, serving with the 36th Division in North Africa, Italy, France and Germany. When it came to military service, however, he rarely discussed it but would point out with pride that his wife, Ellen, was a Marine.

Besides Ellen, Sam is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, John Wallace Webb and Cheri Webb of Fort Worth; his daughter and son-in-law, Carol Webb Dromgoole and Glenn Dromgoole of Abilene; four grandchildren, Lindsay Elliott of Vega, Brad Webb of Media, Pennsylvania, Lauren Lackey of Temple and Russell Lackey of Abilene; two nephews who were like sons, Buddy Webb of San Antonio and Sammy Webb of Honolulu, and many other family members and friends.

Funeral services will be at 3 p.m. Sunday at Matthews Memorial Presbyterian Church in Albany. Burial will follow in Albany Cemetery under the direction of Godfrey-Neese Funeral Home in Albany. Visitation is from 5-7 p.m. Saturday at Godfrey-Neese Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to the Robert Nail Scholarship Fund, the Fort Griffin Fandangle Association, Matthews Memorial Presbyterian Church, the Old Jail Art Center or a favorite charity.

Special gratitude to the nurses and staff of Hendrick Hospice Care, Bluebonnet Nursing Center, Primary Nurse Care and Wesley Court, and to Dr. Joseph Ferguson of Abilene, Dr. Frank O. Seay of Dallas and Dr. Luther S. Key of Albany.