

Lester Johnson



Lester Johnson, 93, of Stillwater died Sunday, September 4, 2011 in Stillwater. A memorial service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday at First United Methodist Church with the Rev. Kyle Anderson officiating. Interment will be in Kingston. Strode Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Lester was born April 5, 1918 in Overbrook to Lester S. Johnson and Lillie Kemp Johnson. Lester attended school in Ravia and graduated in 1935 as class valedictorian and member of the National Honor Society. After graduation he attended Murray State College in Tishomingo where he received an A. S. Degree in 1937. He then enrolled at Oklahoma A & M making the Dean's Honor Roll and graduating with a B. S. Degree in 1939.

On May 4, 1942 Lester was inducted into the U. S. Army and was trained in meteorology. On August 4, 1943, along with 12,000 other G. I.'s he boarded the HMT Aquitania and sailed for Scotland. Lester was assigned to the Eighth Air Force and served in England, France and Germany. He rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant and received the EAME Service Medal with four Bronze Battle Stars. He was discharged September 30, 1945

After the war Lester enrolled at Texas A & M to study Veterinary Medicine. This was a natural as his grandfather had been a Stockman and his father a rancher and highly regarded breeder of saddle horses in Ravia. While at Texas A & M Lester was a Distinguished Student, Outstanding Veterinary Student and President of his Senior Class. He received his D.V.M. in 1950. After graduating Lester went into general practice in Ada and later worked for the U.S.D.A. in the Agricultural Research Service. In 1954 Lester accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Oklahoma State University. His career at Oklahoma State spanned 30 years with his eventual retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1984. While a professor at Oklahoma State Lester received numerous honors and awards for distinguished teaching and was selected as Oklahoma Veterinarian of the Year in 1983. He was a member of several professional organizations including the Oklahoma Veterinary Medical Association of which he was President in 1975. He was the author or co-author of many publications primarily related to horses and cattle. Lester was involved in other professional and civic activities too numerous to mention.

On July 19, 1952 Lester married Lucille Findlay, the love of his life, and they enjoyed almost 56 years sharing their love of travel, particularly to Santa Fe, and collecting Native American art. Lester was proud of his Indian heritage and was an Elder in the Chickasaw Nation. He was preceded in death by his parents, Silas and Lillie, his wife, Lucille and brother, Gene.

Lester Johnson belonged to the Hanner-Sharp American Legion Post 129 Stillwater.