

Tony Bill Sumpter



Tony Bill Sumpter, died December 9, 2017, with his loving wife, Sue, by his side. A funeral service is scheduled for 2 pm Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at Dighton-Marler Funeral Home in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Visitation will be set for Wednesday, December 13, 2017 from 9:00am to 1:30pm.

Tony was born September 13, 1922 on a farm near Fletcher, Oklahoma. Though he worked picking cotton while he was growing up, he said, I wasn't too hefty at farm work . . . I didn't miss many of the planes that flew over, or the wagons and cars that went along the road.

But, anyone who knew Tony knew he could outwork just about anybody. Even into his late 80s, Tony worked full days doing maintenance on his Stillwater rental houses. Tonys scrappy nature combined with his bulldog tenacity for life served him well as a fireman, rough-neck, rig owner, golden gloves champ, professional football player, landlord, and fisherman, to name a few. And only the bold would take him on in a game of dominoes.

At 16, Tony was baptized into Christ in Cache Creek while attending a Baptist Brush Arbor Meeting near Fletcher, OK. In his adult life, he was a long-time member of First Baptist Church, Stillwater.

While in Lawton High School, a 61, 210-pound Tony was a stand-out varsity letterman in football playing both offense and defense. This while working as a fireman at Fort Sill, riding his bike to get between school and the firehouse.

In 1943, Tony entered the Marine Corps, ultimately serving as an instructor in a Land and Sea survival course for pilots during WWII. During that time, Tony also played for the Marine football team, the El Toros, under Colonel Dick Hanley. When the war was over, 17 members of the El Toros team followed Col. Hanley to play professional football for the All-American Football Conference Chicago Rockets. Tony played there for two years. A Rockets teammate, Elroy Crazy Legs Hirsch, went on to a Hall of Fame career as a receiver for the Los Angeles Rams. But Crazy Legs wasn't the only award winner. In 1975, the Jim Thorpe Award Committee named Tony to the All-Time Greats of Oklahoma from the decade of the 1940s.

At the age of 17, Tony broke out as a rough-neck. In the off-seasons, he would go back to the oil fields as a way to make ends meet and stay in shape for football. In late 1948, Tony returned to the oil field for the next several decades. He moved rapidly from rough-neck to toll-pusher to driller. Until 1968, Tony worked for Dudley and Heath Drilling Company, but that year, he formed his own drilling company, Sumpter-Barker Drilling. His company was the first drilling company in Stillwater. Sumpter-Barker drilled wells all over Oklahoma. As a driller, Tony earned the love and respect of the hard-

working hands on his crews. During his drilling years, he also started buying rental properties all around Stillwater and became a beloved landlord to many generations of Oklahoma State University students.

In 1985, Tony married Sue McEntire and the two enjoyed life in retirement together. Tony sold his drilling rig and turned his focus on his rental properties. The Sumpters took cruises, went RVing, entertained family, and relished time at their cabin on Bull Shoals lake where they were active members of Protem Community Church.

Mr. Sumpter is survived by his wife, Sue of Stillwater; daughters Sue Warmbrodt, Beverly Meade, and son, Noel Sumpter; step-sons Carl McEntire and Paul McEntire; half-sisters Bernice Burch, Dorothy Lake, and Pat Mize; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his son, Steve Sumpter; father Sam Sumpter; mother, Ova Young; sisters Orpha Pursley, Evelyn Pate, and Zelma Johnson; half-sister Betty Prickett; and half-brother John Sumpter.

Tony was a beloved husband, father, step-father, grandfather, uncle, cousin, and friend.