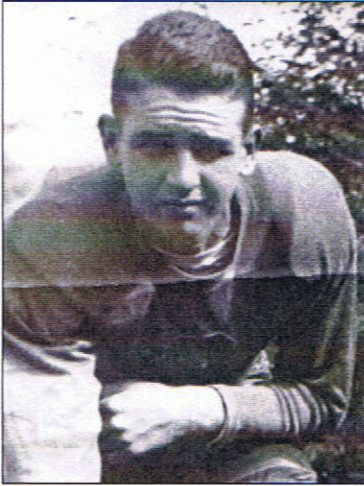




Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



JOE ATKINS

August 28, 1920 - December 31, 2014

Stillwater High School Class of 1938

20th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

September 26, 2015

Joe Atkins was born on August 28, 1920, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He graduated from Stillwater High School in 1938 and was a member of the 1938 state championship football team. When World War II began he was attending Oklahoma A&M, studying animal husbandry. As many young men of that generation did, Joe joined the Marines and was assigned to the 1st Division, 1st Regiment. He was wounded during the assault on Peleliu and wounded a second time during the occupation of Okinawa. After the war, Joe moved to Levelland, Texas and was a roughneck in the oil fields of west Texas. He met Beth O'Neil and they were married on November 5, 1949. They moved to Hall County, Texas where Joe "cowboyed" and managed Bobcat Crossing Camp on the Mill Iron Ranch. On the day after Thanksgiving 1950 they moved to Roy, New Mexico and began ranching in the Yates, New Mexico area. In 1974, Joe and Beth bought a ranch in Missouri where they ranched for five years before retiring to their farming interests in Hale and Lamb Counties, Texas.

Joe took great pleasure in working with the young people in all the communities in which he lived. He started and endowed the Ogle Hopkins Wrestling Endowment at the University of Missouri to provide scholarships for members of the University of Missouri wrestling team.

Joe was instrumental in providing quality horses to the Oklahoma State University Equine Department and horse farm for the benefit of the students. He also took great interest in the Harding County Fair in New Mexico and purchased 4-H animals at the livestock sale for decades to support the area young people.

Joe belonged to numerous organizations over the years, including: New Mexico Mounted Patrol, New Mexico Cattlegrowers, AQHA, Oklahoma State University Foundation, and the Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock, Texas.

Joe liked nothing better than riding a good horse and working cattle with his children and neighbors. Joe loved his community, his family and his country.

Joe was recently honored by the State of New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service. He was inducted into the New Mexico State 4-H Hall of Fame for his decades of participation and financial support to benefit the 4-H members around the state.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Beth O'Neil Atkins, daughter Lenora Neil Atkins and son Hugh Atkins. He is buried at Ute Creek Canyon on the family ranch in New Mexico.

*Presenter
Steven Cooper, Ph.D.*