



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



ERNEST J. BRADLEY

February 9, 1912 - June 23, 2011

Stillwater High School Class of 1929

16th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

September 24, 2011

Ernest J. Bradley was born on February 9, 1912 to Joe and Bertie Bradley in Ava, Missouri. They relocated to Stillwater, Oklahoma when he was seven years old. He graduated from SHS in 1929. He was believed to be the oldest living graduate of SHS at the time of his passing.

Ernest loved sports and lettered one year in football, three years in baseball and three years in wrestling before graduating from SHS. Baseball was his first love in sports and Ernest continued his baseball career as a third baseman and outfielder at A&M. He played 3 years at Oklahoma A&M and earned his degree in Agriculture. Following graduation, Ernest signed a contract with the Cincinnati Redlegs and was assigned to a team in Arkansas. He left in less than one year. He said, "At the time the manager didn't think I was as good as I thought I was."

During WWII he enlisted in the Navy and was in the Seabee's with the 3rd Marine Division. He served in Auckland, New Zealand, Guadalcanal, and Guam.

Ernest met his wife, Wanda Elizabeth Shirmer, at Oklahoma Natural Gas in Tulsa, Oklahoma. They were married on June 7, 1946. Wanda was 9 years younger than Ernest. At first, she wasn't interested because of the age difference. He persisted and she changed her mind. However, ONG did not permit a husband and wife to be employed simultaneously. Ernest said, "One of us had to go and maybe they let the wrong one go." Wanda still says, "Nine was our lucky number." Their nine-year age difference is the age difference of their children, Cindy Martin and Rick Bradley. Rick graduated from SHS. All 6 grandchildren also graduated from SHS.

He was a member of the SHS/C.E. Donart High School Alumni Association, a member of the Lions Club, the O Club, and he attended Stillwater's First Presbyterian Church.

Ernest made a comment just prior to his death to Carol and Roy Helt that reflects on his life. He said, "99 years is a long time to live. I've had some good times and some not so good, but it's been a wonderful life." Ernest passed away on June 23, 2011.

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Rick Bradley
Stillwater High School Class of 1975