



Robert G. Ringo

August 18, 1924 - April 5, 2017

Robert (Bob) Gribble Ringo, a Corvallis community leader and attorney for more than six decades, passed peacefully at his residence the morning of Wednesday, April 5. The memorial service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, April 10 at the Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, 333 NW 35th Street in Corvallis. The burial will be held the following day in Milton-Freewater, Oregon, where his wife Kathryn is buried along with their son, Robert Irvin Ringo.

Remembrances may be made to one of Robert's favorite causes, free mental health care for area veterans provided by Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation, with "Samaritan Veterans Outreach" in the check's memo or online at <http://samhealth.org/GSHF>.

He is survived by four children: Molly, Charlie, Julie, and Mary Ellen. His son, Robert Irvin, preceded him in death in 2011. His family and eight grandchildren were among the great joys of his life. He was blessed with two happy marriages. His first marriage to Kathryn Reese provided thirty-seven years of joy until her death from cancer in 1989; his second marriage to Jane Crider Ringo in 1993 provided a wonderful second chapter to his life until she passed in 2013.

Robert liked to call himself "Benton County Bob," reflecting his love of community and the area he called home for more than six decades. He was born August 18, 1924 in Spokane, Washington, the son of Floyd Virgil Ringo and Claire Aletha Williams Ringo, joining his beloved sister Floydine. He moved to Portland as a young child with his mother and sister. Like many raised during the Depression, his childhood was clouded by poverty and instability, instilling a lifelong compassion for those struggling financially.

In high school, he was small but mighty — running in cross country and being a yell leader. He reached out to the Portland Hunt Club, offering to work at the stable in exchange for learning how to ride. He quickly found a second home, becoming an accomplished rider with a lifetime love of horses. He spent his 16th summer as an apprentice jockey at Seattle's Long Acres.

Robert was 17 at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack; he finished school and worked in the shipyards until his 18th birthday and could then serve. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps and excelled there. He was selected for Navigator/Bombardier school and was named a Commissioned Flight Officer. Upon the formation of his flight crew (some of his life's most important relationships), Robert was first stationed in Sardinia as a bombardier in the 95th Bomb Squadron, 17th Bomb Group. When named Veteran of the Year in 2010, the Albany Democrat-Herald ran a feature article with a summary of his World War II experiences:

He flew his plane, a type called the "Widow Maker," in bombing missions over Italy and Germany and supported the invasion of southern France. Once Ringo had flown 60 missions, he returned to the United States to become a bombardier and navigational school instructor.

Of his service Ringo says, "I was just doing my duty like thousands of other kids. We got shot up and planes in our formation got shot down. Thousands didn't get to come home."

For his contributions, Ringo received the Air Medal with 13 oak leaf clusters, the Croix de Guerre avec palme, and the Air Force Commendation Medal. He continued to serve with the Air Force Reserves, retiring as a lieutenant colonel.

After the war, he enrolled at the University of Oregon. He became an active member of the Sigma Chi fraternity and graduated with a degree in political science. He began law school at the University of Oregon, but transferred to Portland to help his mother. He graduated from Northwestern School of Law, now Lewis & Clark. In 1951, he launched his law career in Corvallis, accepting a part-time position as Deputy Assistant Attorney and opening his own law practice at the same time.

Soon after, he met Kathryn Reese. Not caring that she was dating his friend, he decided that she was the girl for him. They were married the next spring, May 1953. The next several years were devoted to family, building a law practice, and becoming an active member of the community.

Contributing back to the Corvallis community was one of his most important values and favorite passions. An active Shriner, he chaired the Mary's Peak Trek, which brought great joy to so many and important funds for disabled children. He was also an active Mason, Elk, and member of Kiwanis.

Robert chaired the Corvallis school board and also served the Downtown Corvallis

Commission, the Good Samaritan church vestry, the Air Force Reserves, the Pacific Trail Council of Boy Scouts, and the board for Red Cross, to name a few.

Actively supporting Good Samaritan Hospital became one of his most cherished causes. He led both the governing and foundation boards, with a passionate belief in the importance of access to high-quality health care. One of his proudest achievements was helping to provide free mental health care to area veterans.

Professionally, he became renowned for his outstanding trial lawyer skills. The recipient of many honors, including Oregon Trial Lawyer of the Year, he served as president of the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association, was on the Oregon State Board of Bar Governors, and served nationally for the American Board of Trial Advocates. He was also proud to have played an instrumental role in resolving the Rajneesh cult voter registration fraud conflict in the early 1980s, for which Secretary of State Norma Paulus awarded him the Wasco County Peace Prize. He and his partner Jim Walton founded their law firm together in 1951. Sixty-six years later, it remains an enormous source of pride in its current configuration of Ringo, Stuber, Ensor, Hadlock & Smith PC. He had nothing but the highest of respect for his colleagues, along with enormous affection and admiration for his longtime assistant, Wynona Tilton.

His devotion to family was always a foremost priority. Perhaps a reflection on his own difficult childhood, he enthusiastically undertook camping trips, ski vacations, evening sailing, crab-catching, and cleaning horse stalls. Every day, he greeted life with gusto and a sense of responsibility to make the most of the time he had.

Events

APR **Funeral Service** 10:00AM
10

The Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan
333 N.W. 35th St., Corvallis, OR, US, 97330

Comments



“ We so loved and respected your Dad. He did so much for us and Brenda. If it hadn't been for him, she wouldn't be able to do the things she so loves. He will be greatly missed by so many and especially his family.

Judy Rutland Simons - April 08, 2017 at 11:54 AM