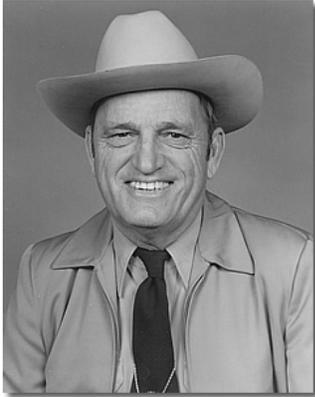




Obituary



Max Westerman, Texas Ranger **1915 – 2006**

The Department of Public Safety's first pilot, retired Texas Ranger Max Westerman, Jr. passed away March 9, 2006. His funeral was held at the Cook Walden Cemetery located across the street from DPS Headquarters in Austin, Texas, on March 13, 2006.

Born in 1915, Max Westerman was the oldest of eight children. He was 91 years of age and is survived by Daisy Carriger Westerman, whom he married in 1941. He also leaves two daughters and one son, two sisters, and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Ranger Westerman joined the Department of Public Safety Highway Patrol in 1937. Starting in 1943 he spent four and a half years in the Air Corp during World War II, where he flew planes filled with troops and cargo over India into China. He rejoined the DPS in the mid-1940s and worked continuously for the DPS until his retirement in August of 1977.

During his time with DPS, he held the positions of Highway Patrolman, Drivers License Examiner, and when promoted to Texas Ranger around that time the Department purchased its first Navion airplane, Max proudly became the first Pilot-Investigator for the Department of Public Safety. He was named Senior Pilot-Investigator and Chief Pilot when another Ranger, James Frank 'Pete' Rogers, joined him as a pilot-investigator in 1951.



As a pilot for the DPS he transported Rangers, technicians, sick persons, prisoners, dignitaries and even bloodhounds. He tracked fugitives from the air and once chased a suspected arsonist as the man fled by car and forced him to stop, landed the Texas Ranger plane on the highway, arrested the man and flew him back to the local sheriff's office where the man wrote out a full confession.

Before his passing Max Westerman wrote his own obituary. After his retirement in 1977, Max said that he never flew again because "I decided I had used up all of my good luck points."

He added that he was ready to "now join those that have gone before me in peaceful rest on the other side of the clouds that I flew in for most of my life."

Max Westerman's Autobiographical Obituary

In the year of 1915 Max Westerman Sr. and Annie Westerman gave birth to their first child, me, Max Westerman, Jr. My parents had eight children in all, four boys and four girls. This made quite a lively household. We all had a delightful childhood.

In 1937, I entered the Highway Patrol in Austin, Texas. When I completed my training, they sent me to Lubbock, Texas and then from there to Big Springs, Texas where I met my wife, Daisy Carriger. We married in 1941 in San Angelo, Texas.

While in the Highway Patrol, I was also trying to go to flying school. Well, that became too much so I had to take a leave of absence from work and focus solely on my flying. Daisy was working at an Orthodontist office at this time, making \$60 a month. Needless to say, we played a lot of cards. I eventually completed my flying school, and then I got a job in Stamford, training cadets to fly. In 1943, I joined the U.S. Ferry Command Flying in Dallas, Texas flying cargo planes. We transported troops and cargo over the hump in India. Most of my buddies never made it over that hump, but somehow I lucked out.

In 1946, I came home. Shortly after that, we returned to Texas, where I got my old job back in Austin. The Department of Public Safety decided to buy their first Navion airplane, I happened to be in the right place at the right time, was transferred into the Texas Rangers, becoming the first and only DPS pilot for 4 years after which, the DPS added another pilot. We bought a piece of land and built a home in Austin. We have remained in that home ever since. It has now been 55 years. Our home was complete after adding 3 children. In 1960, we decided to buy another piece of land, this one on the Colorado River. This house became a place for wonderful summertime memories. We all loved The River Place very much, as it was a big part of our lives. I sure am glad that it has remained in our family.

I retired in 1977 and never flew again. I decided I had used up all of my good luck points. I could devote most of my leisure time to my hobby of raising and selling parakeets. My wife Daisy and I have been long time members of the University Church of Christ. Now I am 91 years old and have had a good life and a wonderful family. I have outlived all of my brothers and sisters, except for Ann and Gertrude, and now join those that have gone before me in peaceful rest on the other side of the clouds that I flew in for most of my life.

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