



Robert "Bob" William Riebe

October 9, 1921 - April 15, 2012

Robert (Bob) W. Riebe, 90, of Santa Barbara, a Marine, an Iwo Jima Survivor and Loving Husband, joined his maker and wife Sunday April 15th, 2012. Bob lived a full, active life until contracting ALS in early 2011. Thru the yearlong effort of friends and caregivers, his wish to pass peacefully at home was honored.

The son of Ernest and Emma Riebe, Bob was born October 9, 1921 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Bob grew up living the life most young men did in rural America in the 1920's and 30's, and successfully graduated from high school. Following his interest in masonry, Bob began an apprenticeship with a local mason, but his apprenticeship was to be cut short by an event that forever changed every American's life, and forever changed Bob's....the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Bob heeded his country's call to action, joined the Marines and served his basic training at Camp Pendleton. He qualified to become a Tank Driver with the 3rd Marine Division Company B, 3rd Tank Battalion, and after few months of training in the U.S., was stationed in New Zealand for further training. He was promoted to Platoon Sergeant and his division fought successfully in the battles to retake the islands of Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima. Bob proudly told of seeing the famous Iwo Jima "flag raising" with his own eyes.

Bob was proud of his service to our country but didn't talk much about his battle experiences. However, one story he loved to tell, was how God saved his life. His tank division had lined up at the edge a sheer cliff on Iwo Jima,

across a field from a jungle. All night, wave after wave of enemy soldiers attacked them. Occasionally some would get close enough to place explosives on and around the tanks. One explosive charge went off right under Bob's tank. Bob was able to get the lower escape hatch open and helped his buddies crawl out beneath the tank. Bob, stunned from the explosion, crawled out from under the tank and stood up to run for the cover of another tank. His leg instantly collapsed and he fell to the ground, just as enemy bullets slammed into his tank right where he had been standing. Bob had had no idea that his ankle had been shattered by the explosion, but he knew that God had made sure that he wouldn't be able to stand or take enemy fire and that he would live to see another day. Well, that he did.

Bob spent months recovering from his shattered ankle at a military hospital near Grand Rapids and was Honorably Discharged in November 1945 with multiple awards in a "Purple Heart". He married the love of his life Mildred Thomas in 1946. They lived in Grand Rapids and Bob continued his love of masonry. Bob was a very good mason, and his work adorned many settings, from homes to churches and community buildings.

In 1956 they moved to Santa Barbara and Bob continued his trade. He later worked at Ambrose Lumber, and then for Macklanburg-Duncan where he excelled as a regional salesman until he retired. After retirement, Bob enjoyed helping friends with masonry work and many of us have the pleasure of seeing his work daily. Starting in 1997, Bob was employed by Channel City Lumber where he modestly liked to joke that he "kept the tank tidy", but everyone knew better. In 2010, and at 88 years old, Bob decided his formal working days were over, and resigned his position. He was one of the best in the business and his wonderful personality, his willingness to help customers and his knowledge, will be missed by the staff at Channel City and the community at large.

Bob adored his wife Mildred and outside of work, they were rarely seen apart. Their love and dedication to each other, and over 60 years of marriage, is a testament to true love. Sadly she passed away in 2007.

Bob was proud to be a Marine, and was proud of the work he did. He loved the music from the 40's and 50's, especially Big Band music. Bob was one of the best joke tellers anyone could meet, and when he wrote to family and friends, he would include a page or two of handwritten jokes. Bob's quick wit and beaming smile will be missed by all of us.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, uncle Carl Riebe, and his beloved wife Mildred. He is survived by his sisters Marian Glass and Grace Anderson, several nieces and nephews and many great nieces and nephews.

Cemetery Details

Calvary Cemetery

199 North Hope Ave
Santa Barbara, CA 93110
(805) 687-8811
http://www.archdiocese.la/directories/cemeteries/info.php?cemetery_id=3

Previous Events

Memorial Service

APR **29**. 1:00 PM (PT)

Veteran's Memorial Building
122 W. Cabrillo Blvd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Tribute Wall

SM

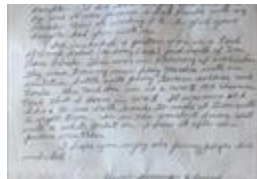
“ Here is the article Bob sent to me, mentioned in his letter with a photo of him
In his Tank.... awesome hero



Sue Moore - February 24, 2018 at 12:52 AM

SM

“ Bob rode with my boyfriend, my granddaughter and I to Casa Grande Arizona for the 65th Anniversary of the Flag raising on Iwo Jima. He and my granddaughter had a fun time playing with her toys in the back seat - a few times her little toys flying from the back to the front seat 😍. She was 3 1/2 years old and also a Patriot Guard Rider. Bob was such a fun guy and told us some stories of Iwo Jima, I was so honored to have him ride with us, and to Cal Him a friend. May Bob RIP - I thought I would share the photo of he and my granddaughter Margot, as well as a letter he wrote back to me after I sent him a copy of the photo. God Bless his family.



Sue Moore - February 23, 2018 at 11:01 PM



“ *Bob was a kind and generous man, always friendly, smiling and happy. He lead a good life and God Bless him in heaven.*



kristi85 - April 26, 2012 at 02:01 PM

CF

“ *We will miss you Bob...from the family of your friends Ron and Lorraine Burnet. We have so many great memories of your jokes, your stories of when you were in the Marines, your friendship to our parents (Ron and Lorraine). You were such a true and kind friend. You will always be remembered. Love from Cathy Frame, Steve Frame, Ian Burnet and Carol Burnet*

Cathy Burnet Frame - April 25, 2012 at 06:47 PM

ST

“ *We will deeply miss our Friend, the jokester, Bob Riebe. He had a happy outlook on life and always tried to put a smile on everyone's face. I will always remember how 'tough' he was on me while we worked together on my brick walkway. Just 'ok' was not acceptable, it was perfect or start over. We know that he is happy now that he is reunited with his love, Millie !*

Stephen+Colleen - April 25, 2012 at 01:23 PM

SO

“ Stephen+ Colleen Ozab lit a candle in memory of Robert "Bob" William Riebe



Stephen+ Colleen Ozab - April 25, 2012 at 01:16 PM

RL

“ 2 files added to the album New Album Name



Robert Larson - April 25, 2012 at 11:34 AM



Wonderful pictures of a wonderful man who lead a full and interesting life.

kristi85 - April 26, 2012 at 01:59 PM

SR

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Scott Reid - April 24, 2012 at 06:27 PM