

## Bob Reed

Bob is another member who migrated to California from Arkansas. While in Arkansas he attended Oak Grove and North Little Rock High School. In 1943 the family moved to El Cerrito (CA) where his parents worked in the Richmond Shipyards during the war. His mother was one of the *Rosie the Riveters*. In 1945 the family moved back to Little Rock.

One day Bob was at the movies and saw a young woman there and it was love at first sight. He actually even remembers the date (April 23, 1950) and the movie (*Night Train to Memphis*). Obviously she made quite an impression since Willa and Bob married later that year. Eventually they had two sons. When Bob speaks of his sons it's quite obvious that he is very proud of them. He now also has 3 grandsons and 1 granddaughter.

Bob and Willa were married for 40 years. She passed away the day after their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary from lung cancer. He spoke of how remarkable she was – handling two boisterous boys – since she had lost one of her arms to cancer when she was just 16 years old. She never let that get in the way of doing anything she wanted.

Bob was a Marine during the Korean War. He spent most of his two years of service in Japan as an amphibious tractor operator. Upon returning to the States Bob and Willa lived in St. Louis where he worked at the Chevrolet Plant.

In 1955 they returned to California where he got every young boys dream job – working on the railroad – specifically the Southern Pacific. He retired after working there for 37 years. It was during his time with Southern Pacific that he met Doug Freeman. (You might remember in a previous *Caught in the Headlights* that Doug also worked for Southern Pacific.) Bob also met JB Gentry at the Shell Refinery and the two of them introduced him to the Diablo A's.

Bob and Willa joined our club in 1977 and he served as President 2 times, followed with the obligatory Past President position and also served as Tour Coordinator.

Bob actually learned to drive in a Model A but did not purchase one until 1975. The 1930 coupe was only \$600 (the good old days). It was a rust bucket having been under flood waters for about 6 months. He eventually restored it and drove it to the 1982 and 1986 Nationals and to Canada twice. He now has 4 A's besides the roadster he just finished restoring. It is absolutely beautiful. But you can bet that the just-finished roadster probably isn't the last one he will work on even though he says he's getting too old to do it anymore.

As we all know, Bob is quite a Model A hobbyist. Marianne and I took a tour of his garage which is loaded with Model A parts – both mechanical parts and body parts. Thanks to him, our unfinished coupe has a very nice frame.

We asked Bob our usual question – is there anything he would still like to do or wish he had done and his answer was "I'm very satisfied with what I've done." And when we asked him the most exciting thing that he remembers in his life – without hesitation his response was when he first laid eyes on Willa.

Bob has a very interesting family background. His great-great-grandfather discovered the first gold in the US during the Revolutionary War. Yohand Reidt changed his name to Reed and was actually a Hessian soldier who deserted his army during that war. One day he was shooting an arrow into a creek where he picked up a yellow rock. He used it as a door stop for quite some time. Eventually they did find out it was gold. His grandfather was kidnapped by the Yankees and was forced to join them in the Civil War – but he also deserted. (Bob stopped what appeared to be a family trend when he completed his tour with the Marines.)

When we asked Bob to be our next member to be interviewed he gave the usual response that he had nothing interesting to talk about. We think that you will agree with us – we beg to differ. Thanks for another interesting and enjoyable afternoon Bob.

