

## Meet Your Neighbor: W.B. “Mac” McLeroy

W.B. “Mac” McLeroy was born to W. B. Sr. and Frances Winona Hawthorne McLeroy in Corpus Christi, Texas, and has lived most of his life in the “oil patch.”

In many ways he is the quintessential Texan—a savvy and successful business man well in control of any situation, rugged and strong yet affable, soft-spoken and almost courtly in manner.

He was the eldest of three children who learned in childhood to adapt to changing circumstances. His father was an early entrant into the lucrative oil field service industry and thoroughly enjoyed his associations with oil drillers and producers all over Texas. Mac recalls frequent moves to places like San Angelo or Winters, Midland or Refugio. Wherever the need was, they went. The result of such mobility was that Mac attended three different high schools in different parts of the state before he reached San Angelo Junior College.



Mac Sr. was an entrepreneur with a deep attachment to the oil patch and a unique way of doing business. With keen insight into exploration and production he could spot a need and figure out a solution to almost any problem that arose. He was in the vanguard of the oil field services that later came to such prominence, but he was not looking to create a major company; he just wanted to take care of his family and do what he loved to do.

Today his son chuckles as he recalls his dad’s business protocol. His two shirt pockets were his office and filing system, and when they became too full to take any more pieces of paper he figured it was time to sell that little company and move on to another area.

Working right alongside him young Mac learned a lot not only about the oil business but also about the importance of hard work and reliability, about problem solving and ingenuity while thinking outside the box, and perhaps the most important thing of all, about making a life as well as a living. That kind of balance between career, family and civic responsibility carried over to the next generation, and despite a number of moves Mac and his family have always been an active part of their various communities.

Shile still a teenager Mac Jr. left San Angelo to join the Navy. His steady nerves stood him in good stead as air traffic controller on the carrier Yorktown. He left the Navy in 1955 to complete his formal education at Texas Tech, and soon he met and fell in love with a beautiful young woman named Muriel Smith. They were married in 1957 and almost immediately he was called back into active duty with the Navy and assigned as tower supervisor for the Naval Air Station at Honolulu.

Both their daughters, Lynn and Leigh, were born in Honolulu, and when they left Hawaii Mac returned to Texas as a proud father and as tower supervisor at the NAS at Beeville, Texas. Mac Sr. was still at it in the oil fields of nearby Refugio and Mac stepped in to help him out now and then. Even before leaving the Navy it was obvious that like his dad he was able to complete contracts ahead of time and under budget, so he quickly carved out a comfortable niche for himself. Eventually a 90-day project for a Houston-based oil company brought the young family to Houston and involved Mac Jr. in major environmental studies, where he was able to apply his no-nonsense practical experience and keen intellect in a new and meaningful way for the greater good. When the company was ready to sell that division he bought it. The McLeroys’ odyssey was over. They bought a house in Alief and put down permanent roots.

The girls grew up and went off to college—Leigh to Texas A&M for a degree in Journalism and later to Houston Baptist University for a Master’s in Apologetics, and Lynn to Baylor for her degree in Finance and Banking. Lynn is now married and living in Katy. Leigh lives in the Heights and is a full time writer

with five books currently in print. Muriel passed away a couple of years ago and Mac moved to Treemont last year.

Though living in a **retirement community** he is by no means retired. He continues to run the business from his home office, while contractors do the leg work, environmental audits and impact surveys. Conference calls and occasional inspection trips are interspersed with his bridge games and other interactions with Treemonsters. He is an avid reader and has graced Treemont with the gift of his personal library (see above photo) of more than a thousand recent books housed in ten tall mahogany bookcases. Check them out in the **Activities Room**. He admits to choosing his books not for information but for sheer reading pleasure.

The McLeroys are a close-knit family. For the last 25 years or more, father and daughters have met every Friday morning for breakfast at the Avalon Grill. Sometimes Lynn's two grown daughters can join them. And now there are Lynn's two granddaughters (great-granddaughters of Mac) who will one day become part of the tradition.

Mac's strength of character and joy in living are not self-created. They are a product of who he is—a man of strong faith in the God of Scripture. He attends a for-men-only class called "Iron Man Bible Class" every Thursday at his church—at 6:30 A. M!

His motto: "Live in the day!"