



# Thomas Paul Clarke

JAN 7, 1933 - SEP 16, 2025



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FLORAL HAVEN

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# Thomas Paul Clarke

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**T**homas Paul Clarke, at the age of 92, passed on Tuesday September 16, 2025, in Broken Arrow, OK, with his loving wife of 70 years, Billie Joyce (Bowden) Clarke and Rita Harrison, his long-time caregiver at his bedside. Together, in their home in Broken Arrow, with family, they fought a 6-year battle with Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease.

Tom was born in Michigan City, Indiana to Otto A. Clarke and Mary (Dreger) Clarke on January 7, 1933. The family moved to Gary, Indiana where Otto managed the Gary Works of US Steel, throughout World War II. There, Tom grew up with his half-sister Jean and brother Robert, his senior by 1 ½ years.

Both Tom and "Bob's" Mother Mary passed when they were quite young, and for a period were raised by Jean, being their elder sister. Otto then re-married to Edna (Johnson) Clarke, who became Tom's loving mother throughout her long life. Tom lost his brother to epilepsy when they were both in their early 20's. Jean married Jack Retseck of Michigan City, and Tom was to become an uncle to 9 nieces and nephews. Jack passed in 2001 and Jean in 2008. Otto passed in 1977 and Edna in 1985.

In Gary, Tom attended Horace Mann High School and then St. Bede's Academy where he was taught by Jesuits. Education was always important to him. A standout basketball player in high school, he went on to Quincy College in Illinois, playing several years where he continued to excel.

Tom was recruited for Officer's School and left Quincy enlisting in the Marine's Flight Program which took him south, for the first time in his life. In the Gulf region - from Pensacola to Corpus Christi and then Miami. Tom became a pilot – learning to navigate single engine WWII airplanes on and off aircraft carriers. Becoming quite proficient he then became a flight instructor teaching others.



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The biggest twist in Tom's life was when he met Billie Joyce Bowden – as it was common at the time for an “Officer and a Gentleman” to attend mixers with nurses – and Billie having graduated the Providence Hospital School of Nursing was currently working in Mobile, Alabama and their fate was sealed.

Soon after, they were wed in 1955, and in 1957 had their first of four children in Corpus Christi, Texas. Tom left active duty in 1959, and they moved north to the Gary, Indiana area to continue building their life together.

Around this time, Tom began his sales career in Industrial Lubricants with the Cities Service Oil company...now Citgo. They had their next three sons there in Gary. He was honorably discharged from active duty as a Marine Captain in 1967. The same year he was promoted within Citgo, and transferred to Cleveland, Ohio where he and Billie continued to raise their family, in the quaint town of Olmsted Falls. This included occasional trips back down south; vacationing with his brother and sister-in-law Arnold and Elizabeth Bowden and their three children – his two nieces and nephew. Arnold and Elizabeth both passed in 2011.

Having climbed the ranks of salesman to sales manager, in 1983, with family now grown they transferred to Citgo's headquarters town of Tulsa, Oklahoma where Tom became National Sales Manager.

He retired in 1998 from Citgo, and they began their next life chapter. They were long-standing members of the Indian Springs Country Club, playing tennis and then shifting to golf, which Tom thoroughly enjoyed (if that is possible). They also enjoyed attending events at the PAC and other Tulsa venues and spending time with their friends through regular “supper-club” outings.

Tom is survived by his loving wife Billie, and their four sons: Mark, Phillip, Robert/wife Debbie (Moore) Clarke, and Peter. His three grandsons (and their partners) Max/Caroline, Sam/wife Hannah (Reese) Clarke, and Spencer/Katrina. And the first Clarke female in more than 100 years... his great granddaughter Penelope (Sam & Hannah's one-year old daughter).

Of all Tom's accomplishments he took the most pride, and found the most joy & fulfillment, in “Family”...the love of his life...his wife Billie, his sons, grandsons, and great granddaughter. His love will carry on and he will be missed by all whose lives he touched.



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Services are as follows at Floral Haven Cemetery:

Public Viewing Thursday 9/25 from 4pm – 7pm; Burial Service Friday 9/26, 1pm – family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, any donations to Dementia/Alzheimers research will be truly appreciated.



# Events


**Thomas Paul Clarke**

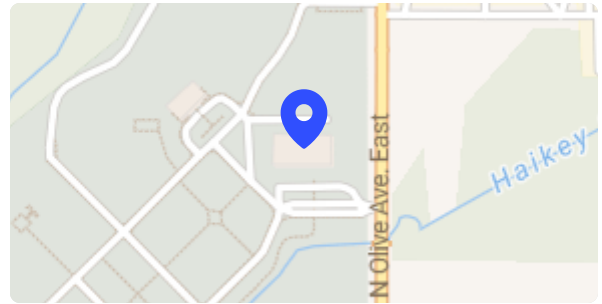
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## Visitation

 **Thursday**, September 25, 2025

 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM CT


 **Floral Haven Funeral Home**  
6500 South 129th East Avenue A, Broken Arrow  
OK 74012

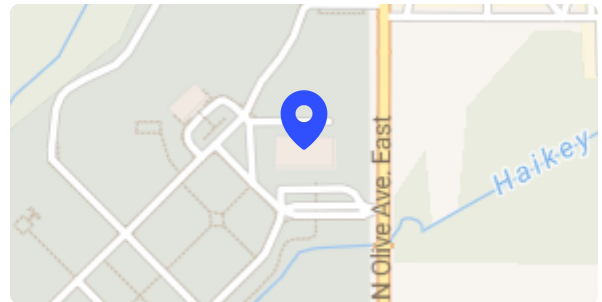


## Graveside Ceremony

 **Friday**, September 26, 2025

 1:00 PM CT

 **Veterans Field of Honor**  
6500 South 129th East Avenue, Broken Arrow OK  
74012





# Tribute Wall

**Thomas Paul Clarke**

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**Ronald Selleck** lit a candle in honor of Thomas.



Ron and I, and our family: Rob and Sarah Selleck Kessler and their children Lily, Jens, and Benjamin; and Cody and Rachel Selleck Adams and their son Sammy; Bobby and Betty Bowden; Michael Ray and Kristen Bowden Coker and their little son Copper Ray; and Peggy Bowden Barker's (who passed in 2023) husband Wayne Barker and their children Mike, Joey, Bree, and granddaughter Jada Bree are sending our love your way from across the country. Tom was such an accomplished man with a striking demeanor. He adored Aunt Billie Joyce and was a hard worker and wonderful provider for her and their four sons, as was Aunt Billie with her surgical nursing career and fierce love for Tom and their family. Uncle Tom always called me Linda Sue whenever he, Billie and family visited us near the Great Dismal Swamp of southeastern Virginia. I have such admiration for Tom and Billie Joyce and all of their years of achievements together. Much love ❤️❤️ and prayers 🙏 for the time of acceptance and adjustment ahead for you all. Linda Sue Bowden Selleck, Sioux Falls, SD

September 25 at 3:13 PM



**The Boys From Univ Of Oklahoma** sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Clarke family.



September 23 at 11:08 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Clarke family.



September 23 at 4:05 PM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Thomas by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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