



Mechanical Engineering  
Academy of Distinguished Alumni

**John T. MacGuire, P.E.**  
*Mechanical Engineering Hall of Fame*

BSME, The University of Texas at Austin, 1943

*Engineer, Investor and Rancher*  
*Curator (Retired)*  
American War Eagle Museum

John MacGuire graduated as a devoted engineer from The University of Texas at Austin with a mechanical engineering degree in 1943. His career included engineering, farming and ranching, road construction, work in the oil and gas business, and founding the War Eagles Air Museum in Santa Teresa, New Mexico to display planes from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, all of which he had personally purchased and restored to put on display at the museum.

John was born in Schenectady, New York in 1920. He attended Penn State after high school and worked for General Electric for a year prior to receiving his degree at The University of Texas at Austin, after which he went on to developing his career as an engineer and museum curator. His career included Douglas Aircraft, General Electric and Allis-Chalmers before he began his farming and ranching career. John's interest in farming and ranching led to the purchase of properties in the Southwest region of the United States and Northern Mexico, which in turn led to his passion for airplanes and flying. He began flying an Aeronca K in 1945 and continued flying all kinds of planes throughout his life alongside his wife Betty. He received a plaque of recognition for having flown as Pilot-in-Command for over 10,000 hours.

John was chairman of the board of Southern Union Gas Company for 12 years and served on several other oil and gas company boards, including Aztec Oil and Gas, Chieftain International, Supron Industries, Delhi Oil and Arkansas Western. He also served as a board member for 42 years of the Lee and Beulah Moor Children's Home in El Paso, a charity founded by his wife's parents. John was a life member of the UT Austin Texas Exes, a member of the UT Chancellor's Council, and a member of the Friends of Alec.

In 1990, John approached former El Paso Mayor Jonathan Rogers with a business proposition, a \$10 million investment in the Bank of the West that has grown into a more than \$950 million institution.

John and his lovely wife of 58 years, Betty, have two daughters: Mela and husband Doug Gunton of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Carol Carnes Johnson and husband Steve Johnson of El Paso; two granddaughters: Lee Carnes of Austin, and Jenny Leavell-Smith and husband Jay of Denver, Colorado, and three great-grandchildren: Chloe Grace Carnes, Audrey Jaquette Smith, and Walker John Smith.