

Phil Bissell

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ROCKPORT, Mass. —

Phil Bissell, the original creator of the New England Patriots "Pat Patriot" logo has died at the age of 97, the team announced Thursday.

The Worcester, Massachusetts, native was just shy of his 98th birthday, according to a book he published in 2014. Bissell was born in Worcester on Feb. 1, 1926.

Bissell was a longtime Boston Globe cartoonist, who also drew greats like Bobby Orr, Ted Williams, Alan Shepard and Winston Churchill.

Over 60 years ago, Pat Patriot, the longtime beloved mascot of the Patriots, was born.

"This is the way it appeared in the paper," he said in a December 2022 interview, pointing to one of the drawings he kept at his Rockport house.

The drawing of the burly football player first appeared in the Boston Globe on Feb. 17, 1960. From blank paper to full image, it took him about 45 minutes to draw, giving the new American Football League's Boston Patriots an identity.

"I just wanted to make a guy that looked like he's ready to go. That he had hands all broken because he was in the trenches digging holes," he said. "He was a real fighter in the trenches, and that's what made him a good Pat."

The logo version of Pat Patriot was the Patriots' official insignia until 1993, when it was replaced by the current logo which is known as flying Elvis.

Bissell never spoke highly of the present-day Patriots logo.

"Frankly, the flying Elvis was fine if it was on the car hood or something. But it didn't have any feeling. This guy's got feeling," he said. "That's why he was able to center the ball and do as well as he did."

"Best logo ever!!!", he said.

The work of the award winning cartoonist continues to hang in NFL, NBA, MLB and many other sports teams' Hall of Fames, his biography said.

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