Max Heeb, M.D., B.S. Med ’51, practiced general surgery for more than 45 years in rural Missouri. His wide range of experiences cover a broad spectrum of surgery cases — all in Sikeston, Missouri. In his book, Max the Knife: The Life and Times of a Country Surgeon, Dr. Heeb includes an assortment of anecdotes from a rural surgeon’s perspective. With unique humor and wisdom, he tells stories that allow readers to better understand the medical field as well as the mind of a surgeon.

From a small town in southern Missouri, Dr. Heeb was a depression-era born surgeon who eventually reached state and national importance in his leadership positions with the American Cancer Society and the American College of Surgeons. He graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor’s degree from Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau in 1949. Following the two-year medical program at MU, Dr. Heeb graduated with honors from medical school at Washington University in St. Louis in 1953.

After Dr. Heeb completed a surgical residency at The Jewish Hospital of St. Louis in 1958, where he became one of the founding members of Ferguson Medical Group after serving in the McClure Ferguson Medical Clinic. The same year, he began his surgical career at the Missouri Delta Medical Center in Sikeston, Missouri, where he remained until he retired on Nov. 9, 2008, at the age of 81 after 50 years and four months of practice.

Dr. Heeb has served as president of various organizations including the Missouri State Surgical Society, Missouri Chapter of the American College of Surgeons, Missouri Chapter of the American Cancer Society as well as MU’s Medical Alumni Organization. He also has served as vice president of the Missouri State Medical Society and governor for Missouri for the American College of Surgeons, chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee of the Missouri Division of Family Services and chairman of the Third Party Medicine, Medical Economics and Governmental Relations Committee for the Missouri State Medical Association.