



Wilbur David Cooper

Longtime El Cerrito Resident Wilbur David Cooper, died peacefully October 28, 2010, at the age of 97. He was pre-deceased by his wife of 73 years, Juanita; and one of his twin daughters, Leslie. He is survived by his daughters, Rosemarie and Carrolyn; his son-in-law Jon; grandchildren Jennifer, Allison, Elizabeth and David; great-grandchildren Lauren and Duke; and 4 nieces.

Wilbur was born in Portland, Oregon, and grew up in the Parkdale area of the Hood River Valley. He was proud of the fact that his father and his grandfather were in the Forest Service, that they worked to develop roads and trails in the Mount Hood area, and that they acted as guides for visitors. Cooper Spur on Mount Hood is named after his grandfather. His grandmother, known as the "First Lady of the Mountain," cooked meals (over a campfire) and did the laundry for the workers and the summer campers.

After graduation from Oregon State College, Wilbur began his career working as a forest guard in the Mount Hood area. Later, he joined the U.S. Border Patrol and was stationed along the Canadian border. Eventually, he became an Immigration Inspector, and in 1948 was transferred to San Francisco and moved his family to El Cerrito.

Wilbur had many interests. A life-long photographer, he also enjoyed printing his own photos. Even though he had no sons, he volunteered his time to work with the Boy Scouts and to lead them on pack trips and hikes. When he wasn't taking care of his garden or doing carpentry and handyman work, he and Juanita traveled extensively. He was also very active in the First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, serving as an Elder, an usher, and a volunteer, and for many years he participated in the Men's Prayer Breakfast.

Because he was orphaned at the age of seven, his family was very important to him. In addition to raising his daughters, Wilbur and his wife also provided a home, at various times, for three of their nieces. He was a generous, kind, and gentle man, and a devoted and loving husband, father, grandfather, and uncle. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Published in Contra Costa Times from December 21 to December 23, 2010