

Helen Burnett Lucking Sieger 1918-2009

Helen Sieger was born March 19, 1918 in Norman, Oklahoma, the daughter of Jerome B Burnett and Ruth E Shumway. She passed away Sunday, October 18th, 2009 at her home after a short illness.

Helen grew up in a number of places, including Tampico and Coatzacoalcos, Mexico; Maracaibo, Venezuela; Indio, California; and Melbourne, Australia: she attended high school in New Jersey and was a graduate of Smith College in Massachusetts. The family traveled from place to place on oil tankers.

She met her future husband, William Lucking, in 1941, and first saw, and fell in love with, the Ojai Valley at Tennis Tournament in that year. Helen and Bill lived in a variety of places during World War II, welcoming their first two children, Lana and Billy. In 1945 they purchased what became Helen's "forever home" on the old Libbey property, and Ruthie was born in 1946. The family lived for 3 years in Michigan so that Bill could attend University of Michigan law school, and returned to Ojai in 1949, where the last child, Carly, was born.

Helen vigorously supported Bill's legal practice, but after her children her greatest pleasure were gardening and hauling dirt and rocks to landscape her property. Her marriage to Bill ended and in 1966 she married Richard Sieger, a joy to her until his death in December of 2008.

Helen and Dick had a lot of fun together. They arranged a land exchange which brought them land at Big Bear. They traveled extensively, driving over most of the United States and Canada, seeing sights, visiting friends and relatives, and collecting matchbooks. They enjoyed eating out at nice restaurants; they lived part-time for a few years in Hollywood and loved to eat at Musso and Frank's, at Lawry's and at Michael's. Dick usually did the cooking, but Helen had certain dishes that were her specialities; nobody will forget her pineapple upside down cake, her swiss steak, her rijsttafel, her salad, and her Sunday morning cottage cheese hot cakes and bacon .

Helen had wide interests. She loved to dance, and she and Bill helped to develop a dance club in the 1950's, which met at the Ojai Valley Inn. She spoke Spanish with a perfect accent. In 1960-61 she was the first woman president of the Ojai Tennis Association; she was decorations chairman for many years; awarded the prizes to the winners of the girls doubles match, and poured tea, elegantly, in the tea tent. Helen was active in Republican politics for many years; and spent a year on the Ventura County Grand Jury. She was a member of the Ojai Hospital Auxiliary for 34 years, and was thus able, to her delight, to slip in and see her

brand-new twin grandsons, Chris and David Ford & their younger brother Spencer. She was a talented artist and landscaper, an avid and superb bridge player until her partners were no longer active; and was a devoted grandmother to an increasing number of grandchildren, loving to take them to Disneyland. But Helen's Ojai home was always so special to her, the place where she was always happy to return.

Her children have always been so proud of her - of her beauty, grace, intelligence and sophistication, always with a smile on her face.

Helen was predeceased by her husband Richard, granddaughter Virginia Hansen, brother Donald Brown and former husband Bill Lucking. She is survived by children Helen "Lana" Fredell, Bill Lucking and wife Bonnie; Ruth Col; and Carly Ford and husband Ernie; grandchildren Heather Sciuto, Andrew Fredell, Will Lucking, Blythe Alapa, Alison Lucking, Catherine Manguson, Stephen Col, Heidi Col, Chris Ford, David Ford, and Spencer Ford: 10 great-grandchildren (and 2 more on the way), and 2 great-great grandchildren. She is also survived by brother Jerry Burnett and his wife Inin, sister Beverly Milligan, and by stepsons Richard Sieger (wife Maria) and Gregory Sieger.

The family would like to thank Dr Raymond and Lorann Sims; Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association; Helen's devoted caregivers, especially Ida Spann, Carmen Gamez and Mercedes Taleon; and all of her good friends who were able to stop by & visit her during her recent illness. A memorial celebration will be held on October 31st, 2009 from 11 to 2 at the Ford Ranch in Ojai. Call Lana (805-646-8526) or Carly for directions.

In lieu of flowers, friends are welcome to make contributions to Ojai Valley Tennis Club Youth Tennis Fund P.O. Box 482 Ojai, CA 93024 or the Ojai Valley Community Hospital Foundation, 1301 Maricopa Hwy, Ste A Ojai CA 93023-3130