



# William Roy Hofman

FEB 19, 1919 - FEB 14, 2015



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## William Roy Hofman

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**W**illiam Roy Hofman February 19, 1919 ~~~ February 14, 2015 Born in Rogers, New Mexico, Roy was the oldest of four siblings. At nearly five years old he treated his newborn sister, Lavon, like his own special doll. This began a lifelong joy with babies. And as more siblings arrived, big brother Roy loved them, teased them and set the example. Roy worked hard as the eldest, farm labor of all kinds, growing up during depression years, living off the land. His mother tried to raise him as a Southern Baptist but some of those stringent rules, such as no movies, no dancing, no alcohol, and no card playing, were not meant for him. He enjoyed a good prank and ran with the fun crowd. In 1938 Roy spied his true love, Wilda, when she applied for her first job as a teacher in Portales, New Mexico. His father was on the school board so interviewed her at the farm. And young Roy “set his cap” for her. After a year of courting, Roy proposed. He was a new college student whose only income was gas money from driving other kids to school, and Wilda turned him down. He pursued her though, quit school and got a job. They married in December 1939. In 1941, they migrated to San Diego with their first child, Willena. By 1944, their family included Wayne, and Roy was drafted into the U. S. Army. He served as a scout and sharp shooter in the Philippines and then patrolled occupied Japan. Wilda nursed Roy back to health when he returned from overseas with malaria and combat fatigue. Roy joined the International Union of Operating Engineers in September 1946, starting as a truck crane oiler, working his way to the operator position. Through the truck crane rental business he touched thousands of construction sites in San Diego County, helping to build the city. In the 1950s, along came a surprise, daughter Barbara, and just 19 months later, the fourth child, Betty. He was a strict father, with very high standards, expecting his children to succeed, and holding firm to his values. Roy and Wilda purchased rental properties, which challenged Roy to expand his abilities to fix anything. He always considered himself a jack of all trades,



## Obituary

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master of none. He maintained houses and cars, and anything else that needed fixing all of his life. In 1962, the first grandbaby, Cassie, was born. There was never a more proud granddad! His arms expanded to include twins, Sharla and Sherri, and then Steve, Stephanie, Tyler, Christie, Cherith, and Tom. How fortunate he was to watch them all grow. Regular granddad activities included Bobby Sox, Moto Cross, Junior Theatre, Little League, graduations, weddings, and great grandchildren... Kelsee, A.J., Megan, Harlee, Blaine, Brooke, Desiree, Allyson, Erik, Finn, Kiera and Lisa. Wow! And let's not forget all the friends, boyfriends, girlfriends, and spouses who were welcomed through the years. Roy could always be counted on to embrace anyone who made his children or grandchildren happy. Retirement at age 60 brought great joy to Roy. He began gardening and recycling, spent more time with grandchildren, enjoyed the Belsnyrobhof cabin, traveled with Wilda around the country and abroad. He enjoyed Quarter Century Club friends, dark chocolate, Jack Daniels, hot peppers (he grew his own, dried them and made his "Devil Dust") and dancing to country western music. And of course, he loved Wilda. Wilda will always be Roy's sweetheart. He always considered her an equal partner. She meant the world to him, and together they made a great team. They shared a wonderful life together, full of joy and commitment. He was devastated when after several years devoted to full-time care-taking, he had to say goodbye to her. He was 93 years old, but able to adapt to continue to enjoy his family, friends and his garden for a few more years. As Dad, Granddad, Great Granddad, Uncle Roy and a dear friend to multitudes, Roy will be missed, remembered and held dear. This is just a glimpse into a life well-lived, an inspiration for us all. He joined his sweetheart on Valentine's Day, so fitting for a man who loved so well.



## Tribute Wall

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**Cassie** posted:

Thanks Rich, I don't know if you know this but I found that poem many, many years ago and typed it in the old fashion way with some fancy font on probably what was one of my first computers and gave it to Granddad. (someone framed and matted it though?) Anyhow, I feel like you, that was how I saw him my whole life, the type of man he was. He shared a lot about those times as I sat with him not to long ago. Special and fortunate is how he and Hootnanner always made me feel, I will miss them so much the rest of my days..!

March 8 at 1:58 AM



## Tribute Wall

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RE

**R Ernst** posted:

This was hanging on the wall in their main bathroom of their house. It always seemed to sum up Roy's life and my thoughts of him as a great man, not as a famous business or political leader, but as a man who understood what needed doing and just did it. Veterans of Hard Years Fade Away We began sometime back, this long goodbye. One by one, they've unclasped their hands from ours and slipped away. Their hearts, having beaten their allotted number of times grew tired and stopped. We children and grandchildren are always caught by surprise. "Not yet!" we cry out. "It's too soon! We aren't ready." We are never ready. The world rolls forward all the same. And we are left with the sweetness and bitterness of life stinging in our eyes. Our throats grow tight, stuffed with things we meant to say but didn't and now it's too late. They were a generation of mostly farm kids and the son and daughters of small shopkeepers, the children of immigrants, of fishermen, of lumberjacks, of furniture makers. Enough of them to mention were blacksmiths' kids. Eighty years or so ago, farmers still used mules and horses to plow and harrow their fields. Eighty years or so ago, it was mostly families and not corporations that owned farms. Farm children learned early about birth and death. They helped the newborn lambs and calves struggle to their feet. And they saw the sun glint off their father's ax as it fell. They watched hens' headless bodies flail in the dust, fighting what had already happened. When their mother set a plate of fried chicken on the table, the children knew the price of their dinner. They were the Depression kids. They grew up in a make-do era, spare of excess. Nothing that could be repaired or patched was thrown away. Many had just two pairs of shoes, one for everyday use and one for Sunday. Many owned not even that. But they had learned to value what they had. And when called to defend it, they went. They were young men and women full of dreams, ready to begin their lives, build homes, have children. All of that they put aside for war. They believed in things like freedom and democracy and right and wrong. And they were unashamed to say so. They believed in personal honor, in keeping your word and in living up to what is expected of you. They fought in World War II and then again many of them, in Korea. They froze and sweltered and bled. They looked into the shattered faces of friends. When it was over, they didn't all come safely home. But those who did set about their lives with renewed purpose. They married and had children. With hard work and frugality, they saved the money for a family car. They bought homes in the suburbs, vacation trips to Yosemite, braces for junior's teeth, piano and ballet lessons, a console stereo and, in time, a big square television set for the living room. They voted in elections. They read their newspapers. They paid their bills. They joined civic organizations. And then, it seemed, in no more than the drawing of a breath, 40 years went by. It is less by the signs of age that we know them as their resoluteness at whatever comes. They have seen much, and they long ago determined what matters and what didn't. As a generation, they have done hard things and lived through sorrow. They have rebuilt and gone on. They have shown fortitude and forbearance. And we have leaned on their strong arms all our lives. We may never see their like again.

February 21 at 10:33 AM



## Tribute Wall

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SH

**Sherri** posted:

I have so many great memories of my grandparents, there isn't enough room here to tell them all! Most of all they were present and loving and included all of our friends and their extended family... They have passed down their kind hearts to their children and to us and so on... They were the true meaning of "great grandparents" and my children that are both in college had a truly special part of their lives. We will miss you Hootnaner and Granddad (GG and DAD) but you will live strong in our hearts.

March 4 at 10:38 AM

PR

**Patty O'reilly** posted:

I have such wonderful memories of Roy and Wilda and the welcoming home they created for their children and their children's friends. The door was always open and we all felt safe and loved. I am so glad they were both with us for so long and lived to have all those great grands! With love to all of you and deepest condolences for your loss. Patty O'Reilly

February 21 at 12:23 PM

SD

**Steve Day** posted:

Vicki and I as well as the kids send our love and our favorite memory....handstands and habeneros! I still have just a little of the screaming hot pepper mix Roy brought to me, hoping to "sear a Texan" he did a fine job. Oh, the handstand part....if you were lucky enough to get a bottle, it was a picture of Roy doing a handstand! Thats living!

February 21 at 11:54 AM

PM

**Phyllis Mirocha** posted:

My deepest sympathy in your time of sorrow. My greatest memory of Roy and Wilda was how they welcomed me into their home at Christmas many years ago. My son and I spent the holiday as if I was family. I have never forgotten the kindness shown to me when I had no family in San Diego. Both, Roy and Wilda will be missed.

February 21 at 10:33 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring William by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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