



John R. Bracken

March 27, 1917 - January 9, 2014

1917-2014

John Bracken, a 36 year resident of Santa Barbara, passed away on January 9, 2014 while walking on Shoreline Park, something he loved to do every day. He is survived by his sister, Dorothy, and his children, Kevin and Pam, and his six grand children, Valerie, Sharon, Saara, Eric, Lindsay and Amanda Jayne, and seven great-grand children and two nieces. John was preceded in death by his dearly beloved wife Lela Bracken and eldest son Brian. He was married to Lela for 61 years in what can only be called a match for the ages, but she sadly passed away in 2004. Their mutual love for each other was inspiring for all those that knew them. They relocated from New Jersey to Santa Barbara in 1978, following their children to California. Once there, John declared that Santa Barbara was perfect, so there really was no good reason to travel anywhere else. After Lela's passing John spent the next 10 years amazing his friends and family by living independently in his home in west Santa Barbara with its magnificent view of the Channel Islands from the deck that he built in the early '80s. He was so proud of that deck and for good reason! He drove himself to his bridge club meetings and his daily walks, and of course to Lazy Acres or the Mesa Cafe to see what they might have for dinner. John was born in New York City, NY. He was the first in his family to complete college, graduating in 1940 with a degree in Electrical Engineering from City College of New York on full scholarship. John spent a brief period in industry

and the Dept. of the Navy before his exceptional results in a competitive exam resulted in him being selected for a position in the Army Signal Corps Engineering Laboratories in 1941. He spent the rest of his 35 working years with the "Labs" as he called them, including a period as an officer during World War 2, rising through many positions of increasing responsibility to the position of Deputy Director, CENTACS at US Army Electronics Command, Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey. John was an expert in radio interference reduction engineering, preparing a large body of work in the field that was used by hundreds of engineers. He received an Army Commendation Medal for work in the field of joint activities between the Signal and Ordnance Corps. John became a very active man during his middle age, swimming up to one mile daily and running up to 6 miles daily at alternate times. Doctors told him that his unwavering dedication to aerobic exercise led to him building his own non-surgical coronary bypass around blocked arteries in his heart. There is no doubt that this contributed to his extraordinarily long life. John was very active in training his German Shepherds in obedience trials in New Jersey, winning over 60 trophies in competition. He was also an active bridge player his whole life and a longtime member of the Cosmopolitan Club where he served as treasurer for many club functions. As a talented engineer John could fix just about anything. His integrity was inspiring. He was known for his very sharp mind, great memory and happy demeanor. He was always quick with a joke, a laugh and a story. John was an exceptionally nice man, a model father, grandfather and great-grandfather, well liked by all that met and knew him. His children and all of his relations and friends will sorely miss him.