



Orlene E. Ashcraft

December 27, 1919 - December 21, 2017

Orlene passed away quietly in her sleep in San Diego. She was born in Kansas City, MO to Alice and Orley Nesselroad. She was the second of five children. She attended S.B. Ladd Elementary, Central Junior and Senior High Schools and completed her A.A. Degree at Kansas City Junior College. She married Bill Ashcraft and they lived in CA while Bill was in the Air Force. After returning to Kansas City, Orlene worked at Panhandle Eastern Pipeline Co. as an executive secretary for 30 years. She and Bill enjoyed travel in the U.S., including Hawaii, plus Mexico and also in Europe. She retired from Panhandle after 30 years to assist in caring for her parents during their final years. When Bill retired from British Petroleum they began to give serious consideration to spending their retirement years in CA. They found their dream location in Rancho Bernardo where they spent 20 years making new friends and welcoming visits from earlier friends and family. They hosted their 50th at Rancho Bernardo Inn after a Nesselroad Family Reunion the previous summer attended by friends and family from Alaska, California, Colorado, Kansas and Montana and hosted by her long-time friend Gerry Lay from Kansas City, MO. Orlene was active in Continuing Education opportunities in Rancho Bernardo for many years. She and Bill loved to drive over to the coast to enjoy the beach and the ocean. They often took their visitors over there to picnic or to dine at seafood restaurants. They traveled to the San Francisco Bay Area to visit her Brother Jack's family and see the sights in Northern California.

Orlene was preceded in death by her husband, Bill, her parents, Alice and Orley, her brother, Paul Nesselroad, and her sister, Louise Holtzinger. She is survived by and will be greatly missed by her brother, Jack Nesselroad (wife Ruthie) of San Diego, her brother Ed Nesselroad (wife Pat) of Deming, NM and many nieces and nephews. Orlene was a very kind and thoughtful lady. She was always ready to help anyone who needed help. Her final resting place will be with her husband, Bill at Rancho Bernardo Community Presbyterian Church where she and Bill served for many years. Address: 17010 Pomerado Rd. San Diego, CA 92128.

Memorial gifts may be made to the church or charity of your choice in memory of Orlene.

Comments



“Orlene made a mark on our lives. She and Bill were always so kind and welcoming. I have fond memories of the Christmas Eve celebrations at their house. Their home was always so neat and clean because (since Mike & Edwin scared them out of child bearing) They were great house keepers. I recall the Christmas Eve that was to become Julies "0" birthday. The reason I can recall it so well (as I was a 4 year old), there was a very bright star in the east... 'not really'. I came down with the stomach flu over at the Christmas Eve celebration and puked everywhere in Orlene's very nice clean house. Orlene made excellent (family famous) divinity candy. Guess I'd consumed a lot, because I can't eat it to this day. Like Mike's, Pecos was a fond memory. As he got older it was probably harder for him to tolerate the kids mobbing him, putting him up on his haunches and holding his ears up so he'd look like one of those wabbits he was born to trail. I don't think he ever made a hostile move toward anyone (but Mike who he only growled at). One last childhood memory of Orlene's was a snowy Christmas Eve celebration in the early 60's. We all went out front to watch Rudolph pass over head. Have since come to realize the star which streaked overhead was probably an early satellite or space capsule. At the time though I was reassured a little longer of the existence of Santa Clause. We will miss Orlene but she touched our lives in profound ways.

Jeff Nesselroad - January 09, 2018 at 09:22 PM



“ My memories of growing up in Kansas City revolve around family. Grandparents, parents, kids, and aunts and uncles gathered in large numbers for holiday or Sunday meals. Aunt Orlene occupies a warm and prominent place in my heart from those early days. I remember her as attractive and stylish, regardless of the occasion. Aunt Orlene was intelligent without being aloof, always smart and just a little smart aleck. But she never offended. Her engaging smile and quick, knowing wink welcomed you into her world. One of my favorite memories of Aunt Orlene happened, not surprisingly, at a family function. She put her arms around my cousin Mike and me and lovingly whispered, “You know, if it weren’t for you two, I think Bill and I would have had kids of our own.” I loved you Aunt Orlene...and love you still.



Ed Nesselroad - January 09, 2018 at 11:20 AM



“ While I have clear memories of a few of these amazing Thanksgiving dinners, and memories of Pecos, I am forever touched by the love and compassion shown to us when Dad passed away. Ed, Nancy, and I were so shocked, so utterly hearbroken to lose Dad, that it is a wonder we made it through those dark days. We each had such complicated relationships with our father that the grief was even more difficult to sort through. But it was Aunt Orlene (and Bill) and Aunt Louise (and Bob) and Uncle Jack (and Ruthie) who organized us and led us gently through the challenges of that awful week. Cousin Jeff and I stayed with Orlene and Bill. I have never experienced such tenderness and compassion - and sweet hospitality. I am grateful to have had several opportunities to share with them, my father's amazing siblings, how much their love meant to me. Paula Kay

Paula Kay - January 27, 2018 at 10:18 AM



“ When Auntie Orlene & Uncle Bill were still living in Kansas City & I was a young boy, they would sometimes take me out for ice cream at Velvet Freeze or to the zoo so I could renew ties with my primate brethren. Bill & Orlene were so loving, so giving, so thoughtful. However, those attributes would soon be challenged. Sometimes, they would have me over to their home so I could see Pecos, their tri-colored Beagle, especially after I lost my own dog, Domino. After playing hard in their backyard, B & O decided I better have a bath before they returned me to my Mom (Orlene's sister). As soon as the water was run, I snuck Pecos into the bathroom so I could baptize him (full-body, back-prone immersion in the Southern Baptist tradition of our forebears). When the distinctly Beagle howls of Pecos' yelps & the thrashing sounds of splashing waters pierced the otherwise stillness of the Ashcraft residence, B & O burst into the sopping wet bathroom. The surprised, stern, angry looks on their faces suggested to me that I may no longer have an aunt & uncle. Although their patience & understanding had been tested to the extreme, they ultimately reacted with unconditional love, resolve & forgiveness.....probably because they knew I would soon be out of their hair (Ha!).

I remember looking forward to the Nesselroad Thanksgivings because the food would flow deep & yummy. Aunt Orlene would often contribute her famous cranberry relish & Dutch Apple Pies. In fact, we still use her recipes today for these as well as other dishes.

I am so thankful for the time Linda & I had with Orlene, Jack & Ruthie, Jeff & Bebs & Julie two Christmases ago when we made a yuletide circuit through California. Though we wish we would have had longer, we cherish the love & fellowship we shared.

Ironically, when I received word of Orlene's passing, I had just completed a wonderful, happy visit with Orlene's brother, Uncle Ed at the Silver City Care Center in Silver City, New Mexico. Make every moment count with family & friends as time does not slow down for any of us.

Michael Crummett

Michael Crummett - January 08, 2018 at 06:56 PM



“ Thanks for sharing, Michael!

Julie Bonderov - January 08, 2018 at 11:14 PM



“ I remember Christmas and Thanksgiving celebrations at Orlene and Bill's back in MO and here in S. Diego. She was a great cook! (Chocolate pecan pie, yum!) She had a gift of hospitality. We found a notebook where she wrote down things like, "Bob likes 2 pillows" and dietary preferences, and other notes on what would make her guests more comfortable.

I remember when B & O went to Mexico, making an outline of my foot so they could bring back the right size of moccasins. I loved those! I still have a tiny clock that came from Switzerland and remember a music box from someplace like that that looked like an Alpine dwelling.

In her later years here, even when with less clarity, she continued to be hospitable, wanting to make sure everyone had a chair, someplace to sleep and thought of others' needs above her own.

She was patient and kind and maintained such a good attitude even when her situation was not ideal and she might have been uncomfortable.

My folks will miss their frequent visits with her. So will I.

Julie B.

Julie Bonderov - December 27, 2017 at 12:39 AM