

Gilbert Irving Smith — 1923-2014



Gilbert Smith

Gilbert Irving Smith passed away peacefully at home in the loving embrace of his wife, Linda, and collected family members. He was 91.

During the past several months myriad friends dropped by to visit with Gil and to share stories. We heard so many stories about how dad had helped people in their careers and personal lives. He was loved and respected by so many folks.

He was born in Pasadena on Sept. 4, 1923.

He was a gifted student and enrolled at Cornell University at the age of 16. Gil graduated from Cornell three years later and he promptly started medical school. He graduated from Cornell's medical school in 1946. He did his residency in urology at New York Hospital and UC San Francisco.

He served as a captain in the Air Force as a doctor. Gil's medical practice flourished in San Jose. He had operating privileges at many hospitals, including O'Conner Hospital and Good Samaritan. He was chief of staff at Good Samaritan for many years.

After he retired from the practice, he volunteered at UCSF to

train residents. His passion for medicine never ceased.

Our dad loved the outdoors. He had a group of buddies called the Menopausal Marching Society who went into the Sierra every year for 10 days. They would emerge from the woods dirty and hairy and intoxicated with the beauty of California. Gil was the last surviving member of the clan.

If you ventured into the woods with him, you had to be prepared for his regular quizzes. Since he knew the name of every California wildflower, whether in the mountains or the desert or on the beach, he expected the same of you. He often remarked, "Seeing the flowers each year is like greeting an old friend."

He loved tending his garden, especially his roses. Gil stood for strength, optimism, and honesty. For his family, if we ever experienced a hard time, he stood tall, and said, "You will be OK, everything will work out." At the end of his life, when he could barely walk, he continued to be a bright shining part of our lives. If we asked him, "How are you today?" he answered, "It is a wonderful day and I feel great."

Gil loved to sail. His first boat was a Thistle and then he moved on to the 505 and finally a Soling. He won many of the important regattas and races on the West Coast. When he was in college, he rowed on the crew team. The walls of his office are chock full of photos of him with his long oar and later as skipper of one of his boats.

He was an avid flyer and every family member had his or her story of near death experiences with dad in the pilot's seat.

He loved to fish and hunt, and he would fly to remote landing strips in small towns in Mexico and British Columbia in search of fish or birds or adventure.

Toward the end of his life, Gil fell in love with painting. His plein air canvases of Marin adorn the walls of their home

and those of friends and family everywhere.

The love of his life was his wife, Linda. They married in 1994 and lived happily in Marin. They loved to travel and told stories of their many trips throughout the world.

Gil is survived by Linda, his four children Terry, Scott, Kim and Tory, his three stepchildren Mike, Liz and Matt, and nine wonderful grandchildren Jesse, Hoby, Lily, Carson, Maxwell, Kelly, Vera, Andrew and Audrey.

In lieu of flowers, consider a donation to Gilbert's grandson's foundation for the blind, Accessible Science.