



# Wayne Edward Armstrong

October 10, 1922 - September 3, 2013

Wayne Edward Armstrong, 90, born Oct. 10, 1922, in Redman, Iowa, died Sept. 3, 2013, passed over peacefully. His wife, Loraine, passed in 2002.

His father, Lonnie Reichstein, died when he was 7 years old. His mother, Lura, married Guy Armstrong, who had his own children; he was a widower. Lura's children were Nona, Wayne and Frank. Lura and Guy welcomed several more children into the world. They were broke and heading West.

Wayne, at 10 years of age, was taken to father Flannigan Boy's Town in Nebraska. There he learned to play baseball and attended Catholic school. Later, Wayne rejoined the family and they made their way toward California. He was like everyone else, sprayed and dipped in sheep dip while waiting in one of the "migrant camps" on the Colorado River on the border of California and Nevada, headed towards Hayward, Calif., known then as Eden Township. Here he attended Tennyson High School. A gifted athlete, he earned money playing for the minor leagues and working for the California Conservation Core in Trinity Alps of Northern California — a place he called home in later years.

After playing on the minors for the St. Louis Cardinals opposite the likes of Stanley "Stan the Man," Musial, he and his brother, Dwight, joined the Army, where he changed his name to Armstrong. Wayne was a member of the Army Air Corps that fought in the China Burma India Theater.

While stationed in India, he was radioman and belly gunner flying over the "hump" (the Himalayas and Burma) supplying food and ammunitions to the 5307th Composite Unit, better known as Merrill's Maunders. Shot down twice and wounded once, he never waited long enough to record his injuries and receive his deserved Purple Heart — his unit was leaving for a mission and he wasn't about to be left behind. He was discharged Oct. 6, 1945, at McClellan Air Force base in Sacramento, Calif.

After his service, he and Dwight went together and rode across the U.S. on their Indian

motorcycles, working ranches for money. He then went to Napa, where his family was living. There he met and married Loraine Bishop, and raised two children, Holly Armstrong (Oglesby) and Jake Armstrong

Trinity never left his heart. He and his family returned to South Fork Coffee Creek in 1959 where, as a family, they camped for weeks at a time, hiked on overnight camping trips to the many lakes in Trinity, and fished every day. The family has gone every year since. Wayne and Loraine stayed up there all summer in their later years. It was there that he demonstrated his talents as a mountain man, gold miner, horse/mule packer in the back country, which he referred to as God's house.

He became a friend and a legend there, helping out others with cabin building or anything that was needed; like he always did for everyone. Both Wayne and Loraine were friends with Helen and Gil Gates. Failing to patent the three gold claims down South Fork, he was able to purchase a bit of land six miles up the road from the gates, where he built a cabin as a family legacy.

The best times Wayne and Loraine's lives were had at South Fork. People from all around (of all ages and kinds) began to hang out with them. He was, however, averse to having bears in camp. Many a time Holly remembers waking up to him yelling and running them off bare as they were bears. He was also a darn good cook.

Wayne made his living in general construction, but was much more than that to the people who knew him.

He leaves behind both his children, Holly Armstrong (Oglesby) and Jake Armstrong; grandchildren, John Oglesby, Matt Oglesby and Alan Oglesby, Cole Armstrong, Keaton Armstrong and Hayley Armstrong, all of Napa; Frank Reichstein; stepsister, Dorothy (Armstrong) Groom; and two half-brothers Larry Armstrong and Norman Armstrong.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Nona (Reichstein) McClellan; brother, Boyd Reichstein; stepsister, Jean (Armstrong) Jabin, Dorothy (Armstrong) Groom; half-brother Donnie; and stepbrother Dwight Armstrong.

Wayne was the coach for both girls and boys Fly League, Babe Ruth and American League for years; he was an excellent coach. He cared for all the kids like they were his own. He was named "Father of the Year in 1958." He even coached T-ball after he became "Grandpa."

Wayne also continued to play baseball in the Old Man's League when in his 30s. He was also president of the Denny California's Miners Association. His hobbies included horses, owning a beautiful herd of approximately 60 head of prized Black Angus cattle, gold mining, baseball, fishing with friends, hunting with in-laws Bill Bishop and Alfred Bishop and, of course, Dick Bishop, fishing with Mel Amaral and others. He could do, and did, several different things. I still believe there was nothing he couldn't do.

Donations in Wayne's name to the charity of your choice would be appreciated. He will forever be remembered with the greatest love.

# Events

---

**SEP** **Memorial Service** 11:00AM  
**14**

---

Claffey & Rota Funeral Home  
1975 Main Street, Napa, CA, US, 94559

# Comments

---



“ Dear Jake & Holly- Oh how my heart aches for you during this sad time. I know how much our parents mean to us and how sorrowful their loss can be.

Uncle Wayne was one of my favorite uncles. He was a wonderful man. He and my dad, Jim, could tell stories like no one I know! They would be laughing so hard while telling the story that we would have to ask over and over again what happened next!

He could mend fences and mend hearts. He truly was one of a kind. My fondest memories were at south fork, riding horses, panning for gold. Seeing all those stars in the heavens. And Uncle Wayne & my dad drinking so much that when Wayne accidentally fell toward the fire they both swore he never got burned!!!!!! what a pair they were together.

The Bible holds out a hope for all of us that we will see our loved ones again. Acts 24:15 states there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous. ON EARTH, not the way it is now, but as paradise - just like the one Adam & Eve lost for us by sinning. Wayne's mom had that faith, his sister Nona MacLellan had that faith and so did his half-sister Jean Jabin.

We will indeed see them all again on paradise earth with no sickness or death.

Jake - I'm truly sorry for your loss. I think it might be harder for you than your sister. Only because you weren't able to be as close to him as you wanted to be.

Susan MacLellan Christen

**Susan Christen** - September 20, 2013 at 12:24 PM

---



“ Holly,  
Sorry to hear about your dad. I knew he was an awesome guy but I never knew what an incredible life he had even before he came to Napa. I remember me as a city boy, helping your dad load up his barn with 3 string bales of hay. It was nothing for Wayne but this boy felt the pain. :) He shared his trips to his claim site in the Trinity mountains and was always a generous person. He was what best of Napa in those days. He was always straight with you and what mattered is if you knew how to work hard and were honest. I am sure your mom and dad can now share a beautiful sunset together. You are in my thoughts, Oscar

**Oscar Panizo** - September 19, 2013 at 04:45 PM

---



“ Holly and Family,

So sorry to hear of the loss of your dad. Jimmie loved him so much. They are both in heaven now shooting the bull. I see where it said that Mel Amaral was your dad's buddy. He was Jimmie's neighbor and Jimmie loved him as well. They are all up there sharing their fishing stories. Deepest sympathies.

Love

Lynda Guiducci and Family

Lynda Guiducci - September 16, 2013 at 01:00 PM

---



“ Wayne always made me feel like a part of his family and I was very proud to be as well. I also loved his passion puddin' with a passion and thank him dearly for that recipe as I prepare it for myself every Thanksgiving and Christmas. Love you Wayne and will miss you and never ever forget you. Rest in peace, you and Lorraine.



Theresa Oglesby Studebaker - September 13, 2013 at 07:13 PM

---



“ My step mom Pam introduced me to Wayne when I was a teenager...he let me keep my first horse at his house he let me tag along with him and ride his horses too Cherokee was by far my favorite...Wayne thank you for feeding my horse passions..I have many memories and will think of you often..your friend always, Sandy Harris Liebig

sandy - September 13, 2013 at 02:59 PM

---



“ I was blessed to have 9 fantastic uncles, all of which became an intricate part of my life when my father passed at a young age. My Uncle Wayne was one of them. I remember fondly all the great visits when my Aunt Loraine and Uncle Wayne lived on Pine Street. What great times and great memories. Uncle Wayne lived the life most dream about.

Dwight

Dwight - September 12, 2013 at 10:48 AM

---



“ Rest in Peace Uncle Wayne. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Many wonderful memories of you and Aunt Loraine.  
God be with you Holly and Jake and your families.  
My love to you all.  
Cuz Stephanie

Stephanie Nichols - September 12, 2013 at 08:49 AM

---



“ Wayne will always hold a special place in my heart, he was a great man that will be missed. I miss his smile and his humor. Thank you for the opportunity to know him it was truly a pleasure. -Jenna C.

jenna hc - September 11, 2013 at 10:24 PM



“ Those summers on Thompson Avenue so long ago. At 10 years old we thought we knew everything. Lorraine brought a girl on pass from NSH(just a bit of a trouble maker) on weekend passes to the house. My mom had no problem with me spending time there. Wayne allowed us to indulge our not thought over knowledge often. Riding the colts bareback, still have that nasty scar from that barbed wire fence. And many other things that we knew we could do no matter what they said. Mending fences, hauling hay. feeding that herd from the back of the truck. Going with Wayne so early in the morning to the south of Soscal Ave to wrangle some calf's with Lorraines Brothers. Never realizing how that confidence I gained would be so valuable later in life. Wayne was an awesome mentor to two very bratty girls. He taught us so many things without us even realizing it. He loved to tease me with Polish jokes. Work hard and you sleep better. Get the job done first then horse around that is if you had any strength left. With his crooked smile and twinkle in his eye he would say " if you think you can handle it, but don't come crying if you get hurt. Pick your adventures. You will be missed Wayne but the memories and lessons learned will forever be in my heart. Rest in Peace terry

Terry - September 12, 2013 at 10:00 PM