



Eugene Winthrop Sturrock

February 6, 1923 - January 14, 2016

Eugene "Gene" W. Sturrock, age 92, died January 14, 2016 surrounded by loving family. Gene was born February 6, 1923 in El Segundo, CA to Andrew and Ethel Sturrock. He is preceded in death by his parents and brothers Allen and Andrew.

Gene recalled the "Great Depression" and how it forced his family to move from California to Texas where his mother had relatives. They ended up settling in San Antonio where they rented a house on St. Mary's fixing up one side of the house to take in boarders for extra money. He remembered his big treat every week was to go to the Empire Theater for 10 cents. He lived next door to a very large house where Judge Anderson lived. Years later Loop 1604 was named for him because of his service to the city. Gene attended Bonham Elementary and then went to St. Mary's Parochial School where he said he had to wear knickers for the first time and got wacked with a yardstick one time by a nun for misbehaving.

In 1932 the family moved back to California to the small town of Hawthorne and then to Norwalk. In both towns his mother owned second hand furniture stores. Gene helped repair and refurbish items to be sold. While in California he experienced a major earthquake. He also met the actor Buster Crabbe who portrayed Flash Gordon. He remembered keeping one of the cigarette butts that the movie star had been smoking.

The family moved back to Texas in 1937 and settled for a short time in San Angelo where they lived on a farm. Then they moved to San Antonio where once again they lived on one side of a house and rented the other. He started school at Page Jr. High and it was at Page that he began his love of basketball. From Page he went to San Antonio Tech where he learned plumbing and refrigeration. He loved playing basketball so much that he would ride his bicycle in the freezing cold to practice at Central Catholic because Tech did not have a gym. In high school he was also a member of the National Honor Society.

In 1941 he took a job at Duncan Field making \$50 a month which he considered a good salary by the standards then. In 1942 he was promoted to Aircraft Engine Mechanic. During this period Pearl Harbor was bombed and war was declared. At the age of 19 he was sent to England as a Volunteer Civilian to a classified destination called Station X. He remembered the trip over to England as a difficult one and that the ship next to them had been torpedoed. He wore the uniform of the Army while in England and he recalled fondly his time stationed in England. Though the work was hard he loved the English people and how beautiful the countryside was. Later in life he returned to England with his wife Sue to revisit some of the places he had been while stationed overseas.

He returned to the states in 1944 and he was drafted into the Navy where he was sent to boot camp in San Diego. He was then sent to Aviation machinist Mate School in Oklahoma and then to El Paso to service Navy aircraft. A funny thing he remembered from his time in El Paso was to never order green peppers with your chili. He then went to gunnery school and passed the exam to enter the Aviation Cadet program which took him eventually to Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania where he played on the soccer team. After that he went to Navy preflight school in Iowa but the war with Japan ended and in

1946 he became a civilian again.

He went back to work at Duncan Field in San Antonio which had become Kelly AFB. He was assigned to a job as a carburetor trouble shooter. The engines were extremely loud and they did not wear hearing protection. As he became older he would experience hearing problems that were probably related to that time in his life. In 1947 the government was authorizing employees one year of leave to increase their education. He decided to go to Trinity University under the GI bill and receive a basketball scholarship. It was at Trinity where he met his future wife, Sue, and as he said they just "hit it off". He married her on March 5, 1949. He returned to Kelly Field as an aircraft flight mechanic and joined the Air Force Reserve. He was called to active duty in 1952 during the Korean War. So, during his military career he wore the uniforms of the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

Gene and Sue had six children; Tom, Mary Anne, Carol, John, Janet, and Patricia. They attended Asbury UMC and Trinity UMC where Gene was heavily involved in youth sports and coached both basketball and softball teams. He was responsible for having a baseball field built for Trinity UMC. He was a great athlete and was especially proficient at basketball, water skiing, and bowling. Many summers were spent at Canyon and Inks Lakes with family and friends water skiing. He remained at Kelly AFB until he retired. In 2000 he and Sue moved to Fredericksburg, TX.

Above all, Gene was a family man devoted to his wife and six children providing them with everything they needed in the way of a loving and safe home. He was forever working on projects around the house. He did not believe in paying someone else to do a job that he could do himself. He was a mechanic, a yardman, an electrician, a plumber, a roofer, a framer, and a concrete worker. He was the consummate handyman. You name it he could

do it. He never missed an event that his children were involved in from sports to concerts to graduations to births of grand babies. Not one of his children can think of a time that he was not present in their lives.

Gene was known fondly as Popo after the birth of his first grandchild. He was blessed with nine grandchildren; Tara, Tiffany, Matthew, Jared, Jacque, Kimberly, Rachael, Emily, and Michael. He has also been blessed with seven great grandchildren, the youngest being born just two days before he left us.

We love you and we will miss you gene, Dad, and Popo!