

## Dean Hemphill

1925 - 2016



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Dean Paxton Hemphill passed away at home in Bunker Hill Village on September 16, 2016 at the very accomplished age of 91.

Dean is survived by his wife, Eleanor "Elle" Jones Hemphill and his four daughters and their husbands, Deanna Hemphill (Kevin Williams), Carol Hemphill Burke (Michael), Catherine Hemphill Strohbehn (Daryl), and Dana Hemphill LeMaster. Dean will be greatly missed by his six grandchildren: Kaye and Garth Strohbehn; Michael Dean, Kelly, and Natalie Burke; and Trent LeMaster.

Dean was born on April 5, 1925 in Seattle, Washington to Virginia Paxton Hemphill and William Clarence Hemphill. His father's work required the family to move to California and Dean grew up in South Pasadena and Pasadena. Following high school, in 1943, he served three years in the US Army: first as an engineer in training, then as a heavy machine gunner (354 infantry, 89th division), and as an MP in Germany and Austria. He was reticent to speak of his years of service, but was proud of his participation in the Battle of the Bulge and the liberation of a concentration camp.

After discharge in 1946 at Fort Bliss, Texas, Dean continued his studies at [UCLA](#) and University of California, Berkeley. He received his MS degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cal Berkeley in February, 1950 and began a career with the Shell Oil Company.

He married Eleanor ("Elle") Jones in 1951 and was looking forward to celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary this December. Together they had four daughters who will always remember him as being a kind and exceedingly patient father who encouraged them to pursue their goals.

Dean was transferred several times for Shell, finally to Houston in 1966, working with Research and Development. He was listed as inventor/co-inventor on a number of U.S. Government-issued patents related to offshore drilling equipment and platforms.

He was a Fellow of the Marine Technology Society and served as president of the Houston organization for a time. In the years after his retirement, Dean was able to pursue his interests in model-building, woodworking and travel. He attended the WoodWorkers Club of Houston (WWCH), completed a number of ship models and woodworking projects, and built a collection of historic tools. He and Elle enjoyed attending Central Texas Shell Retirees Club events. Dean and Elle also greatly enjoyed traveling with the Cal Alumni group, the Early American Industries Association (EAIA), and especially with their daughters and their growing families.

A memorial Mass is scheduled for 10:30 am on Friday, September 23rd at St. Cecilia's Catholic Church in Houston, with a reception to follow at the church Community Center. A short interment ceremony will be held at the Houston National Cemetery on Monday, September 26th at 12:30 PM. The family would like to thank Dr. Biswajit Kar, MD and his entire team at Memorial Hermann Heart & Vascular Institute-Texas Medical Center for their kindness and respect toward Dean during his final illness. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to a charity of choice.

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