



## Lawrence W. Johnson

1924 - 2014

Los Altos

Lawrence Johnson, a Hewlett Packard materials engineer, has died at age 89. He died on March 22, at peace in his home in Los Altos, with his children at his side, surrounded by the jazz music he loved.

Larry was born in 1924 and grew up in Washington D.C., son of Dr. Aaron G. Johnson, a Dept. of Agriculture cereal crops scientist and Ruth M. (Westcott) Johnson, a studied pianist and loving homemaker. At an early age he began riding the trolley car to the local music store at the bottom of Rodman Street to purchase mono singles of the budding jazz genre. He would continue to collect singles, LP's and eventually CDs till his final days.

He went to school at Alice Deal Jr. High, then Woodrow Wilson High School, where even in the early days his inquisitive nature had him and his friends building Tesla coils in class. He joined the cadets, played cello, and graduated in 1942.

In 1942, Larry received a Westinghouse Cooperative Scholarship enabling his attendance at Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University). It was in his freshman year that the love of electricity 'burned energetically in his heart', he wrote in a note to a college friend. Vacuum tubes circuits caught his eye. WWII got in the way, and after basic training in Florida, he was chosen to spend two quarters at Stanford University as part of the Army Special Training Program, studying electrical engineering. He served at Oceanside, San Luis Obispo, Monterey and the Presidio in San Francisco before being discharged in 1946, when he returned to college to finish his degrees. He graduated with a BS (Physics) '48 and a MS (EE) '49.

Larry worked on Carnegie's 200-inch cyclotron project in Saxonburg, PA, where he met Isabel Beck, daughter of Penzoil Oil refiner, John Beck. They were married in 1947. Their happiness was brief, unfortunately, when Isabel passed away in 1955. Now a widower and footloose, Larry, who had been working for Bendix in York, PA, took interest in moving back west. He started working for Hewlett Packard in 1956.

He worked in oscilloscopes, and later moved to Materials Management and the world of semi-conductors, creating a team that developed HP's company-wide 'Preferred Parts Listing' which was innovative and revolutionary for the time. He retired from HP after 30 enjoyable years as a Materials Engineer, and later worked in the same capacity at Trimble Navigation, eventually retiring 3 more times.

It was at HP that Larry met the love of his life, Esther (Wilson) Hanson, a young widow herself with a young son, Brad. They married in 1957 and built their first of three Los Altos houses. They shared 54 years together until Esther passed at home in 2011. Theirs was a charmed union, full of love, family, travel, corgis, and beach houses. He was very proud of his wife, children and grandchildren, and loved spending time with his HP retiree friends.

Larry had lived in Los Altos for 57 years at the time of his passing, and was a member of The HP Retired Employees Club, Beta Theta Pi fraternity, and the Society of Stukely Westcott Descendants.

Predeceased by brother Lewis R. Johnson, sisters Elizabeth W. Johnson and Marian Chase, Larry is survived by three children and five grandchildren; son Douglas S. Johnson of Mountain View (Alexander, Victoria, Jack, all of Sunnyvale); daughter, Elizabeth R. J. M. Mamer (Philip) of Caldwell, ID (Duncan, Annapolis, MD, and Derrick, Moscow, ID); and stepson Bradley W. Hanson of Cobb, CA.

A gathering to celebrate Larry's life will be held on April 27th at 2pm at the family home in Los Altos. A private ceremony for the scattering of ashes of both Larry and Esther over Monterey Bay will happen in early summer.