

LCDR Glenn Harold Brown Jr., USN (Ret.) (1921 - 2014)



May 31, 1921 - October 14, 2014

Glenn was the first of three children born to Glenn and Harriet Brown in Los Angeles, California and raised in Alhambra where he attended Alhambra High. His senior year he received the Bausch-Lomb Outstanding Achievement Award in Science and Math and was the class valedictorian. He studied engineering at the California Institute of Technology (Cal Tech). He often would tell people that he played in the Rose Bowl, but then would explain that it was Cal Tech's home field, even for intramural games. Glenn worked at many odd jobs to pay for his education including a dangerous stint at a felt factory. He graduated with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and served during

[WWII](#) in the Naval Reserves in California and in Hawaii training gunnery pilots.

He met Laurette, his future wife, in May, 1947 when they both worked for the Navy Bureau of Ordnance in Washington, D.C. where he worked on guided missile development. They wed October 2, 1947 at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan, near Laurette's home. Their first child Cynthia was born on their second anniversary at Fort Ord, California while Glenn was stationed in Monterey.

Glenn was Chief Engineer on a naval oil tanker, Executive Officer on an ammunition ship and twice assigned to "The Desert Ship", a building in the desert at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico dedicated to guided missile systems. Their son Ken was born at the nearby Fort Bliss Army Hospital in El Paso, Texas in 1952. Glenn enjoyed hunting and hiking in the desert and nearby mountains and there were frequent square-dance parties, trips to White Sands National Monument and visits to Mexico.

The highlight of Glenn's naval career was as Commanding Officer of the Destroyer Escort USS Forster, DER334, from 1956 -1958 in Seattle, Washington where he was the only captain to volunteer bringing a 300-foot ship through the Ballard Locks into Lake Washington on family day to watch the hydroplane races at the request of the Squadron Commander. After another tour at White Sands, the family was relocated to Tokyo, Japan where Glenn was assigned to the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG).

Daughter Laurie was born there in 1960 at Grant Heights Military Dispensary. Glenn was intrigued by the Japanese culture and learned to speak and read Japanese. Family vacations often involved staying in small Japanese inns, wearing kimonos and eating local food. Glenn formed lasting personal relationships with associates in the Japanese Navy that went well beyond the usual creating a rich cross-cultural experience for the entire family. With hunting somewhat limited, Glenn enjoyed skeet shooting, and explored serious amateur photography.

After retiring in 1964, the family settled in Oxnard. Glenn worked in civil service as a supervisory engineer at the Naval Engineering Center at Port Hueneme and later as a Technical Information Officer running two large sections at the Pacific Missile Test Center, Pt. Mugu. Glenn fulfilled a lifelong dream by becoming an instrument-rated private pilot and occasionally flew in conjunction with his job. Accustomed to wearing a seat-belt as a pilot, Glenn's life was spared in a potentially fatal head-on car crash in 1969 because he was wearing a seat-belt at a time when most cars didn't even have them.

In retirement, Glenn enjoyed stock market trading and investments, gardening and travel. He became very active in the community, gleaning in the fields for Food Share, delivering for Meals on Wheels, and helping in the food pantry at All Saints' Episcopal Church. He was a volunteer Jack-of-all-trades at the church for many years, even as his health began to fade. Glenn was preceded in death by his sister Janet Edwards and brother Lawrence Brown.

He is survived by his wife of sixty-seven years, Laurette; his daughter, Cynthia Brown and wife Anne Marie Moos; his son Kenneth and wife Margie; his daughter Laurie Anna Von-Straussenburg, grandson Andrew Brown, granddaughter Kara Yanagawa; and numerous nieces and nephews.

As a pilot, Glenn drew spiritual inspiration from a line by John Gillespie Magee, Jr. in his poem High Flight: "While with silent lifting mind I've trod the high un-trespassed sanctity of space... put out my hand... and touched the face of God".

The family extends heartfelt thanks to his caregivers of over five years, Celena Albuna and her staff for the excellent, kind and truly loving care they gave Glenn; and also to Dr. Josephine Soliz and the Rose Avenue Family Medical Group.

A memorial service will be held at [All Saints'](#) Episcopal Church, 144 South C Street, Oxnard at 11:30am on Saturday, November 1st. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to [All Saints'](#) Discretionary Fund. Glenn's ashes will be inurned at the [All Saints'](#) Columbarium.

Published in Ventura County Star from Oct. 29 to Nov. 1, 2014