



Lester Lorenz Welch

March 2, 1921 - June 10, 2017

Beloved husband and father Lester Lorenz Welch left this world peacefully on Saturday, June 10th, 2017 at the age of 96. A long-time resident of Fullerton, California, Mr. Welch's quiet influence extended far beyond the local area. He leaves behind an enduring legacy of service to his country, love for his family, a passion for learning, and success in business. Born March 2, 1921 in Webster City, Iowa, Mr. Welch is the son of Edna Mae and Lawrence James Welch. He graduated from Webster City High School in 1939, where he was valedictorian and president of the senior class. Active in 4-H, Mr. Welch sold his purebred Hampshire sheep in order to pursue an undergraduate degree at Iowa State. But his education was interrupted over concerns about the aggression of Nazi Germany and its allies. In the summer of 1941, Mr. Welch hitchhiked to the Fort Leonard Wood military base in Missouri to join the military. On June 1, 1942, he was called up for active service, six months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Mr. Welch served in the European arena during World War II as part of the 573rd Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion. Mr. Welch returned to the U.S. on the "Grey Ghost," as the Queen Mary was known during the war. Upon his return, he finished his degree in Electrical Engineering and then went to Harvard Business School where he earned his MBA in 1948. Mr. Welch then secured a position with the Square D Company in Detroit. On May 7, 1955, he married Nancy Howe. Along with their growing family, the two moved to Fullerton, California in 1960. Not long after, Mr. Welch turned his interests to Accounting and eventually became a Certified

Public Accountant in 1968. He built a successful practice and continued to serve clients until age 89. In 2008, Mr. Welch spearheaded a reunion at the Queen Mary in Long Beach of military personnel who had served in the five ground radar battalions during WW II. Their service was recognized by many, including then governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger. Mr. Welch is survived by his wife of 62 years, Nancy Welch of Fullerton, California; daughter Wendy Gordon and husband David of Rockport, Maine with grandchildren Megan and Dylan Gordon; son Dave Welch of Fullerton, California; daughter Susan Slanina and husband John of Trophy Club, Texas with grandson Cameron Slanina and wife Brittney of Grapevine, Texas; great-grandson Oliver Scott Slanina; granddaughter Corynn Slanina of Dallas, Texas; brothers Lawrence J. Hartley of Fort Dodge, Iowa and John Hartley of Palm Desert, California, and sister Mary Alice Hansen of Bishop, Texas. He is predeceased by his brother Frank Welch of Boone, Iowa. The memorial service will be held Saturday, 6/17, 9:30 a.m. at the Memory Garden Chapel; 455 West Central Avenue, Brea, California. In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that donations be made to the Honor Flight Network or the Gary Sinise Veteran's Foundation.