

David Pouncefoote Legge

13 Oct 1916 – 19 Mar 2007

David Pouncefoote Legge, beloved stepfather to Stephen Mathews of Auburn, Peter Mathews of Tiburon, William Mathews of Denver, and Joseph Mathews of Danville, and beloved great-uncle to Zon Harper of Topanga, died at age 90 in Lake of the Pines, Auburn.

Davo, as he was known to his family and close friends, was a 55-year resident of California. Born in Hayes, Kent, England, he lived in Bangalore India as an infant, where his father was a paper importer. Most of his schooling was in England; he attended Heathfield Preparatory School near Hayes, Cheltenham College, a military training school near Gloucester, and Tonbridge School in Kent. He spent summers with cousins, working at farm jobs. He excelled at swimming and rowing, and enjoyed soccer, rugby and mischief.

In 1933 Davo moved to Shanghai China, where he worked with the British American Tobacco Company, and rowed competitively. After three years in Shanghai, and another three in Mukden, Manchuria, he returned to Shanghai briefly before the outbreak of war saw his enlistment in the Hong Kong Royal Navy Volunteer Reserves.

Following an adventurous seven years in the Hong Kong Navy, much of it on Motor Torpedo Boats where he saw a lot of action, Davo was demobilized and returned to London via the Suez Canal. While in London, awaiting his transfer back to British American Tobacco in Shanghai, he met a fiery Irish redhead, Patricia Hanna, a medical secretary, on a blind date. They dated for a couple of months, until David shipped out for Shanghai, arriving in February 1947. En route, he cabled a proposal to Patricia, which she accepted.

Patricia arrived in Shanghai in September, and they were married immediately. They lived in Shanghai and Calcutta for the next five years. Patricia was very uncomfortable and often ill in the tropical climate, so in 1952 David took a 3-month leave from B.A.T. to spend the summer touring England. Then quitting B.A.T., they traveled to California, where David's sister was living in Topanga, near Santa Monica.

A long-time friend from David's earliest Shanghai days was now living in San Rafael, and bravely invited the couple to visit. After two months, David was delighted with Marin County, and started looking for employment. He found a sales position in San Francisco with Otis-McAllister Coffee, complete with a large company apartment on Post Street. After assignments in London and Ethiopia he returned to California, where he purchased a home on Belvedere Island, and began working with British Overseas Aircraft Corporation.

The Legges lived in Belvedere for nearly twenty years before Patricia died after a long illness. David wanted to

honor her by scattering her ashes in the Bay, and found a neighboring Belvedere sailor, Sally Mathews, to take Patricia's ashes out on her boat. (Sally had done the same for her late husband only months earlier.)

David and Sally started socializing, and were married within the year, with Davo's mother and Sally's father both attending. Davo and Patricia had no children, but Sally had four sons, and David reveled in his new family. With Sally's encouragement, he was naturalized in 1980, and retired from B.O.A.C. later that year.

David enjoyed cooking. He and Sally socialized with friends and neighbors, hosting many gatherings in the Belvedere lagoon home they shared. They spent a lot of time on their boat, and became involved with the California Academy of Sciences, where they both were enthusiastic docents. They traveled the world on Academy trips, snorkeling off many tropical islands.

In 1998, tired of the demands of a large older home, they moved to Villa Marin in San Rafael. David could still enjoy cooking in his compact kitchen. Still near many friends, they rejoiced in their newfound freedom, celebrating with their extended family on a two-week cruise to Russia and the Baltic States. In 2000, Sally was diagnosed with cancer, and passed away in December. David continued to live at Villa Marin until 2004, when he moved in with his eldest stepson and daughter-in-law in Auburn (Lake of the Pines).

A long-time fan of science fiction, David continued to read voraciously. He attended local functions and participated in boating activities at his new home, along with many visits to children's and grandchildren's homes. He relished two cruises, to Alaska and to his beloved Shanghai (and Russia and Japan). David attended Bell Road Baptist Church, and studied the Bible. Announcing he wanted to become a member of his church, he was re-baptized on Palm Sunday 2006 with much of his family in attendance. To David's immense delight, his Ninetieth Birthday celebration in Sept 2006 attracted nearly thirty of his family, including seven toddlers, for a grand beach-front party.

David had intermittent serious health concerns, but was feeling well. Following a wonderful weekend with two stepsons visiting and dinners out at several favorite restaurants, he quietly and peacefully passed away at home in the arms of family members.

In accordance with his wishes, David was cremated, his ashes to be scattered in San Francisco Bay (as were those of both his wives). A memorial service will be held on June 2 on Angel Island, when his ashes will be scattered in Raccoon Strait from a family sailboat, the *Sarah Jane*.