



Robert Clifton Benson

December 17, 1933 - January 23, 2021

Robert passed away on January 23, 2021 of natural causes. At the time of death, Robert was surrounded by his children at his home in Wenatchee, WA.

Robert was a third-generation Oregonian, born in Portland, Oregon on December 17, 1933. He was twin to his beloved sister, Barbara Ann (Benson) Owen, who passed away on April 14, 2019. Robert and Barbara were depression babies and lost their father, Clifton Leroy Benson, at the age of 3 years old. Robert recalled being very protective of his twin sister during their childhood as she was the most important person in his life. As a single parent, Roberts's mother, Anna Margaret (Varien) Benson, leaned heavily on her deceased husband's sister and brother-in-law, Millie (Benson) Redell and Robert Redell, to help with raising her children in Portland, Oregon. Robert and Barbara's mother, Anna, re-married to Murl Coe and moved back to Burns, Oregon where Anna was born on the Prather Creek Ranch just outside Burns. The original homestead still stands today near the Burns Airport. Robert, Barbara and their new stepbrother, Hall Coe, spent much of their time growing up riding horses, hunting, and fishing in and near Harney, County, and the Steens Mountains. Robert was a wonderful storyteller and shared many fond memories of living and growing up in the old west. Robert was proud of his heritage and his family's Ranch at Prather Creek and the Ryegrass Ranch.

During Roberts's senior year he quarterbacked football for Burns High School

and set a record of 5 touchdown passes in one game during the 1951 season. Nearly 50 years later in 1999, Kellen Clemons of Burns, Oregon bested Robert Benson's long standing passing record with 6 touchdown pass in one game. Clemons went on to quarterback in the NFL for 11 years.

Robert received his master's degree in wildlife and range management at Oregon State University where he also quarterbacked for the Beavers. After Roberts first semester of college, he could not afford to enroll in the winter semester at Oregon State and was immediately drafted into the U.S. Army. After basic training Robert was sent overseas to the Korean Peninsula during the war, soon after Robert was sent to England to work on electronics with the RAF. While on leave from the Army, Robert met Shirley Ann Buck in Portland, Oregon where he arranged housing for her with his beloved Aunt Millie Benson Redell and Uncle Bob Redell. The rest is history, Robert married Shirley on January 27th, 1956.

After serving in the Army, Robert returned to school at Oregon State. In between studies Robert and Shirley started their family, adding two sons, Clay and Daniel, and two daughters, Susie and Joy. After graduation, Robert's forestry career began where he lived in Burns and Heppner, Oregon and later when he transferred to Entiat, Washington with the assignment as Forest Ranger (Ranger Bob). This was a high light of Roberts's life as he was destined to live his life in the forest. During Roberts tenure as Ranger at the Entiat District, Wenatchee National Forest, he was nominated by his peers and decorated by the Department of Agriculture with the "Superior Service Award - for extraordinary performance in planning, organizing and directing the administration of a Ranger District subjected to severe devastation by natural disasters". Robert often said it was his employee's that made everything happen.

In the mid 1970's Robert was transferred to the Wenatchee Forest headquarters in Wenatchee, WA, where he served as head of the Forest Districts Land-Use-Planning. While burning the candle at both ends, Robert and Shirley built a successful Amway business to the status of Emerald which

provided them the ability to retire in 1980 after 26 years in the federal government.

In 2000, Robert wrote and published a book about his early forestry experiences titled "Forest Lore". His sense of humor and positive outlook ruminates in the pages of his book where he writes of spending his summers away from college, stationed on the lookout tower with his dog, Webster.

Robert had a love for Labrador dogs. During his lifetime he proudly owned, loved and adored six dogs - Cecil, Chief, Webster, Duke, Kasie and Sadie.

Soon after retirement Roberts's wife, Shirley, contracted Metastatic Breast Cancer. Shirley was the love of his life and succumbed to cancer on November 29, 1986 at the age 50. During retirement Robert and Shirley took in their grandson James Benson and raised him like their fifth child.

Robert met the second love of his life, Marilyn Benson, in 1988. Marilyn and Robert shared the same love for the outdoors and dogs. When Robert was not fishing or hunting for big game, he would take Marilyn and Kasie out to the duck blinds to enjoy some loving moments. Robert was fortunate to be married to two different amazing women, both for 30 plus years. Marilyn succumbed to Cancer in September of 2020.

Roberts's greatest gift was his ability to always be happy and bubbly. Robert had a great passion for flying remote controlled airplanes. During his last years you would find Robert with his friends at the Red Apple Flying Field in East Wenatchee, WA. Robert had an amazing talent flying aerobatics and was a competitive pattern flyer into his mid 80's.

During the spring of 2019 Robert was treated by his family to a helicopter flight up the Entiat Valley. He was able to see the regeneration of his forest and dream of the days when he explored the upper reaches of the Entiat headwaters on horseback and pack mule.

Robert was a self-taught, accomplish pianist. He wrote and recorded several pieces of music. One of his pieces is titled "I'm just an old Cowboy". Robert was not short on words. If you showed up in a bad mood or wanted to

complain, he would set you straight and have you laughing in no time.

Through all the years, he loved his children and was the kindest grandpa we could have ever asked for. His last words he spoke before passing were “It’s time – I love you Jesus”.

Robert is survived by his children: Clay Benson of Texas; Susie Benson of Wenatchee, WA; Joy Benson of Winthrop, WA; and Dan Benson of Hayden, ID. Grandchildren: James, Melissa Ann, April, Danika, Mike, Joshua, Emily, Brigitte; and great-grandchildren: Mitchell, Miles, Malachi, Major, Leanna, Stella, Rocky, Simon, Jace, Mia, and Michael. Nephews: Michael, Jeffery, Steven, and Kent Owen. Sister In-Laws: Bonnie Coe and Gail Outhwaite.

Robert will be interred to rest at the Evergreen Memorial Park & Mausoleum at a private service with his family. Please contact the Jones & Jones – Betts Funeral Home, Wenatchee, WA for details of the viewing time.

Tribute Wall

KB

*“ We were so sad to hear of Bobs passing .He was such a good friend. We were flying buddies. We had many laughs together and happy moments .Bob always tried to accel at everything and always did.
We will miss him dearly but always have the good memories.
Love you Bob. Sincerely Ken and Sue Burgar*

Ken Burgar - February 04, 2021 at 03:09 PM

DA

Thank you! We are sure he enjoyed you too!

danika - February 05, 2021 at 11:21 PM

SP

*“ I am sorry to hear about the loss of your Dad. I would love to hear from your family
you can call me at 784- 1156 I still live in Entiat.
Sarah Petersen*

Sarah Petersen - January 30, 2021 at 11:48 PM

DA

Thank you for your condolences. I will pass your information on.

danika - February 05, 2021 at 11:24 PM

SR

“ My Family knew Bob from Burns, Or. My dad Lauren Jordan , worked with your dad on the Malheur Forest And my mom, Donna was great friends with Shirley. We also have great memories of Murl Coe and family. I happen to live in Wenatchee and have had the privilege of a few conversations with Bob over the years of the fond memories. And it is of great sadness to hear of his passing. He was a wonderful person.

Shirley Jordan Reyes

Shirley Jordan Reyes - January 29, 2021 at 06:39 PM

DA

Thank you for your kind words.

danika - February 05, 2021 at 11:23 PM

DM

“ Met Bob in 1969 - good friend all these years and an all-around good guy

Dick

Dick Matson - January 26, 2021 at 12:30 PM

DA

Thank you for your memories. He sure was a special guy.

danika - February 05, 2021 at 11:24 PM

ST

“ 1975 punching out a local boy in Mr. Bensons front yard Bob said nothing but that 1,000,000.00 smile he will be missed and a true honor and privilege to have known RIP.....we got the watch..sj

Steve - January 25, 2021 at 07:43 PM



Dad is this you? Love, Danika

danika - February 05, 2021 at 11:25 PM