Larkin

Vervin Gilson

September 21, 1924 ~ December 16, 2015

After 91 years of flight, Gil's plane came to a final rest on Dec. 16, 2015, leaving a legacy of love, service and family devotion. He navigated 35 combat missions during WWII, enjoyed 63 years of romance with Illa Jean, worked as a civil and structural engineer, maintained an immaculate yard, and got a hole-in-one during his passionate golf career. Upon the news of pancreatic cancer a few short weeks ago, Gil said, "whatever happens, I have lived a good life. I have no regrets." As a testament to the tenants of his religious faith, he enjoyed a sharp mind and good health for 91 years of his life. Even this last summer, he performed all his own yard care and home maintenance on the beautiful house he built 35 years ago.

In 1942, Gil married Illa Jean Erlandson and became the proud father of 3 sons, Larry (Barbara), James (Meg) and Phil. He is also survived by his 6 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, a great-great grandson and a spoiled rotten cat, Mea. He was preceded in death by his son Phil, sister LaFon and daughter-in-law Sharon Ruff Gilson. Vervin was known as ‚ÄòGil' or ‚ÄòVR' until the grandchildren bestowed the distinctive name of Ponga. Ponga was the grandfather that attended every scouting event, dance recital, swim meet, soccer match, baseball game, and school assembly. He was the grandpa and great grandpa that was always there. No hobbies or interests ever superseded his support for family events. He was the family's peacemaker. He wanted everything to be well with everyone. He took every opportunity to steal cookies and candy whenever possible. His sweet tooth was his greatest vice. The ill effects were offset by his tenacious effort to care for his beautiful yard and daily golf routine. He was fiercely independent and proud to teach us the value of hard work.

Gil embodied the elegance and grace of the Greatest Generation. As a proud veteran of World War II, Gil flew 35 missions with the 741 squadron of the 455 bombing group. Stationed in Cerignola, Italy, Gil navigated the B24 Liberator to the oil fields of Poland, Romania, Berlin and other long distant targets during the war. His plane was crippled by flak over Italy. He returned from the war and obtained an engineering degree from the University of Utah and had a very successful engineering career. He was the construction manager for projects like the Capital Theater.

It\s impossible to describe Ponga's devotion to the love of his life, Illa Jean (Marner). Our sadness of his passing is only foreshadowed by the joy he must feel for his reunion. His family was the light of his life.

You have shared the life and experience of nearly a century. You grew up during the great depression and fought during the second World War. Thank you for your legacy and love. God bless you and may we always remember you for your love and unfettered service to our Country. You were always there. Thanks for the great flight. Good bye, Ponga, we love you.

There will be a celebration of his life held on Tuesday, January 5, 2015 from 5:00 to 7:30 PM at the Memorial House in Memory Grove Park, 375 North Canyon Road (120 East), Salt Lake City, Utah. There will be a military rite held prior to the celebration at Larkin Sunset Lawn Cemetery, 2350 E. 1300 S. Salt Lake City at 4:00 PM. Condolences can be shared with the family at www.larkinmortuary.com.