

MERRILL, Irving

Sunday, March 6, 2011



Irving Rodgers Merrill, Ph.D. Jan. 1, 1919-Feb. 22, 2011
Born in Muscatine, Iowa, to the late Jesse and Dorothy Merrill, Irv passed away peacefully, of natural causes, at home in Rossmoor at the age of 92. Irv attended high school in Ames, Iowa. He graduated from Cornell University in 1941, majoring in speech and theater, and married his high school sweetheart Ginny in 1942. An officer in the 284th Field Artillery of Patton's 3rd Army, Irv participated in the 1944 Allied invasion of Europe. After WWII, he served 30 years in the Army Reserves, retiring as a colonel. Irv received his Ph.D. in the field of mass communications from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana in 1954. From 1954 to 1960 he was Director of Television Research at Michigan State University's educational

television station, WKAR. He subsequently served from 1960 until retiring in 1977 as the Director of the Communications Office for Research and Teaching at UCSF. He spent the 1967-68 academic year at Guy's Hospital in London, England, as a Fulbright scholar. Irv served as President of the Health and Science Communications Association in 1968-69 and 1972-73. Long-time residents of Burlingame, Irv and his wife Virginia relocated to the East Bay in 2000 in major part to be near their daughter Cindy. Irv loved his seaside retreat at the Sea Ranch and was elected President of the Sea Ranch Homeowners Association in 1980-81. Among his many other interests, including mountain climbing and photography, Irv had a love of music, and played violin for the Peninsula Symphony in the early 1980s. He also had a passion for genealogy and the history of the West, and was a longtime member of the Oregon-California Trails Association. Irv extensively edited and annotated his grandfather's diary *Bound for Idaho: The 1864 Trail Journal of Julius Merrill*, which was published in 1988. Irv is survived by his devoted wife of 68 years, Virginia (Ginny); his loving children Cindy Gonzales (Manuel), Walnut Creek, Vance Merrill (Rosangela Merlo), Canberra, Australia, Jay Merrill (Rocio), Guam, and Bob Merrill (Bobbi Welch), Arcata; his grandchildren Jon Merrill, Canberra, Vanna Gonzales (Curtis Barnes), Phoenix, Amalia Gonzales Dahl (Christian), Copenhagen, Denmark, and Jessi and Zoe Merrill, Arcata; and his great grandchildren Julius Barnes and Aida and Uma Gonzales Dahl. A celebration of Irv's life will be held in the spring for family members and friends. Memorial gifts in Irv's name may be made to the UCSF Memory and Aging Center.

This article appeared on page **Z - 99** of the San Francisco Chronicle