



Charles Porter Root

December 15, 1918 - November 8, 2017

Charles Porter “Put” Root, M.D.

1918 – 2017

Charles Porter “Put” Root, age 98, died after a brief illness at his home in San Luis Obispo, California on November 8, 2017.

A member of the “Greatest Generation”, Put was born in Gilbertsville, New York in 1918, the youngest of three children. Put found his life’s work as a physician and earned his M.D. from Columbia University in New York City. When he completed his medical residency in 1943, the U.S. was at war, and he was promptly commissioned into the Medical Corps, U.S. Navy, and ordered to the Pacific. He served as a battlefield surgeon with the 3rd Battalion, 26th Marines, for the duration of WWII and was awarded a Bronze Star during the Battle of Iwo Jima.

For the next 21 years, Put served around the world as a Navy physician and even saw the battlefield once again in 1966 at the hospital in Da Nang, South Viet Nam. He ended his Navy career as the Commanding Officer at the PSNS Hospital in Bremerton, Washington. Put moved to San Luis Obispo to work as a physician at the California Men’s Colony after his Navy retirement.

Before deploying during WWII, Put married Marian Cawley, a nurse, who worked alongside him during his residency at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City. After the war, they had three daughters, Pamela, Deborah and Barbara. The family, as is typical of a military family, were stationed on many bases in the states and overseas, including San Juan, Puerto Rico and Subic Bay,

Philippines. Put's idea of a great family vacation was a trip to a National Park and over the years the family visited most parks and monuments in the western U.S. He imparted his love of nature and travel to his children who recall these trips fondly. Put and Marian were married 25 years when the family lost Marian to breast cancer.

As a boy, Put was a golf caddy and learned the game. Golf became a lifelong passion and he played regularly well into his eighties. In 1971, a chance golf foursome with Winnie Gist at the San Luis Obispo Golf and Country Club sparked a marriage that lasted 40 years. Put and Winnie were enthusiastic gardeners and their home at 1307 Mill Street was a garden showplace, recognized by the Obispo Beautiful Association and many passersby. They loved watching sports and were both diehard fans of the San Francisco Giants. Their miniature schnauzer, Gus, ruled the house for many years. Put loved to read and would spend hours reading his favorite genres, American or military history and spy thrillers. He had a keen memory, especially for history, and would amaze his daughters with his recall and analysis of historical events. He loved a good political argument, especially over a glass of California wine. He enjoyed fine dining and delighted in treating the family to dinner at the lovely restaurants in the area.

After Winnie's death in 2010, Put sold their San Luis Obispo home and moved to The Villages where he met his beloved companion, Diana Cornelius and was active and happy until the end of his life.

Put is survived by his three daughters, Pamela Root and husband, Chuck Padoor; Deborah Root Jennings and husband, Gary; Barbara Root and wife, Ann Dahl; grandchildren, Sarah Jennings Brockway and husband, Jimmy; D'Ann Jennings Schneider and husband, Nicholi; great grandson, Jackson Brockway; local step- grandchildren, Chris and Vivian Paris; and beloved companion, Diana Cornelius.

At his request, there will be no service.