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Nov 19 1920 - Feb 11 2006

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San Diego Union-Tribune

ALFORD, JACK LELAND

Born November 19, 1920 in Long Beach, Calif.; passed away in San Diego February 11, 2006. Born into a Navy family, Jack attended Punahou School in Hawaii and the Harvard School in Los Angeles as a young man. Jack went on to attend the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis and was an active member of the class of 1941 alumni group. He was commissioned as a Ensign in 1942 and served as an aircraft maintenance officer at Pearl Harbor and North Island Naval Air Station through the end of World War II. After the war he returned to Cal Tech, where he received his Masters and Doctoral degrees in Engineering, graduating Magna Cum Laude. After post-doctoral work in earthquake research, he was employed as a research engineer in the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and headed the engineering division of the US Naval Ordnance Test Station. He also worked at

Technicolor Corporation as Assistant Technical Director. Later, at Aerojet, he headed the design project for the fuel tanks on the first NASA lunar landing module. Those fuel tanks can still be seen today on the Landing Module at the Smithsonian Institute's Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C. In 1959 Jack was hired as one of the first three members of prestigious Harvey Mudd College's engineering department, where he eventually served as Chairman for eleven years and held the Dutch Kindelberger Chair. In 1963, he developed the college's very successful Engineering Clinic, which allows students to gain "hands-on" engineering experience by working on company-sponsored research and design projects. The clinics are still an integral part of college's curriculum. Jack retired from Harvey Mudd in 1990. An avid sailor in his spare time, he was an active

member of the Balboa Yacht club, where he chaired the committee that ran the annual Ensenada Yacht Race in the 1970s. Since his retirement, he enjoyed living in the San Diego area and was especially active as a president and board member of the Pacific Regent, where he resided with his wife. Jack is survived by his wife Elizabeth Humann of San Marino, his son Chris of Huntington Beach and his daughter Margaret of Springfield, VA as well as four granddaughters. In accordance with Jack's wishes, his remains were placed in the care of the Neptune Society and his ashes will be scattered at sea. A private memorial was held at Pacific Regent for family and friends. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the San Diego Hospice, 4311 Third Ave., San Diego, CA 92103 or www.sdhospice.org. Please sign the guest book at obituaries.uniontrib.com