

In Memoriam Lloyd O'Connell
March 18, 1925 – September 13, 2023
EHS mover and shaker, 1984-2015

Lloyd was born on March 18, 1925, in Oakland CA to James Lloyd O'Connell Sr. and Lillian Lauretta O'Connell. 1949. His elementary schooling was at St. Augustine Catholic School, and he graduated from University High School in 1944. That same year, he enlisted in the Navy, did his basic training at the San Diego Naval Training Center, and later became a radar specialist. He met his future wife, Geraldine (Gerry) Ruth Williams, at the Army Navy YMCA in San Diego. During WWII, he served in the Pacific on the USS Brookings, leaving the ship to attend Officer Training School at Oregon State in 1945.

While in Oregon, the war ended, and he left the Navy and transferred to UCLA as a business major, but graduated in 1950 with a BA in Education. In 1957, he completed his Master's in Education at San Diego State University and began his 35-year career in Education as a 4th-grade teacher in the Albany Unified School District in northern California. He moved to Hilmar, CA to teach 6th Grade and Physical Education in high school.

As his family grew, he and Gerry moved south to La Mesa, where he taught 6th Grade while he finished his Master's Degree. The family finally settled in Encinitas, where he became the Principal of Ocean Knoll Elementary (1960-76), Pacific View (1960-61), and Park Dale Lane (1976-79). His other projects included founding Director of Summer School, Encinitas Union School District (1961-73); Federal Project Director. (1961-74), Author and Director of State Projects for the Educationally Handicapped and Early Childhood Education. Returning to the classroom, he finished his career as a 5th-grade teacher at Pacific View Elementary (1980-83).

He was widely engaged with his community. He was Charter President/Secretary of the Y's Men's Club – North Coast YMCA, a member of the Kiwanis (11 years), a member of the congregation at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Del Mar and later St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Encinitas. He joined the Encinitas Historical Society in 1984. Ida Lou Coley was a mentor and a fount of information about the town's early days. He wrote grants and fundraised to help restore the schoolhouse. He served as President 12 times, established and led the Downtown Walks, established the Docent Program, and founded the 3rd Grade History Writing Program.

His leisure time was spent camping, playing golf, fishing, sailing and reading westerns and detective novels. Basketball was a passion. John Wooden gave him a try out at UCLA and he coached the 145-lb basketball team at UCLA his Senior year. Later he joined the Rocking Chair Basketball League in Encinitas. His team, The Whiz Kids, were the champs in 1966-67. He loved working in his beautiful garden and dancing with his wife, Gerry. He was unwavering in his love and support of his children and grandchildren.

He is survived by his daughters Elizabeth Dreazy of Encinitas and Catherine O'Connell of New York City, and his son James L. O'Connell III of San Diego, his two grandsons Trevor Hackett of New York City and Joshua Dreazy of Oceanside. He was predeceased by his wife, Geraldine (d. 2007), and his daughter, Eve (d. 1971).

www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/encinitas-ca/james-oconnell-11461894

