



PACIFIC LUMBER INSPECTION BUREAU

Tribute to George Albert Thompson

December 21, 1929 – October 23, 2021



Long-time PLIB Secretary-Manager George Thompson passed away peacefully on October 23, 2021 at Olympia Transitional Healthcare & Rehabilitation. He led PLIB as its Secretary-Manager from 1976 until his retirement in 1999 at the age of 70.

George was born in Prague, Oklahoma to Alex Monroe and Willie Ona Thompson. George's mother raised him and siblings Lloydell Ryle, Margaret King, Don C. Thompson, and James M. Thompson alone. Both parents and his siblings preceded him in death.

George graduated from Oklahoma State with a BS degree in Forestry in 1947. In 1951 he enlisted in the U.S. Army as a meat and dairy food inspector and was honorably discharged in 1954. In 1953, while still in the U.S. Army, George married Sybil Ross and the two never left each other's side through their nearly 68 years of marriage.

In 1955, after being discharged from the Army, George entered the Southern Pine Inspection Bureau (SPIB) training program for lumber inspectors. After a year of training, he served as a mill supervisory inspector in North and South Carolina, and then was promoted to field representative covering Washington D.C. area. Four years later, George was transferred to New Orleans as Administrative Assistant to Albert Boisfontaine, then Secretary-Manager of SPIB.

In 1965 George was tapped to assist James Carr, Secretary of the relatively new American Lumber Standard Committee (ALSC). Six months later in July 1965 he was appointed as the Secretary of the ALSC. During his tenure with ALSC, the revision of the ALS Standard SPR-16-53 was accomplished after a lengthy and often heated battle over sizes of green vs. dry lumber. The decisions made during George's tenure at ALSC laid the foundation for the current product standard used today, Voluntary Product Standard PS 20.



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In 1969, George, Sybil, and their family of two boys, left the D.C. area and the ALSC for California where George served as Secretary and then General Manager of the Redwood Inspection Service (RIS). After seven years leading the RIS, he accepted the position of Secretary-Manager of the Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau, a position he held for 23-1/2 years until his retirement in December 1999.

Over his 45-year career he served as a voting member of the ALSC full committee as well as the ALS Admin & Finance Committee, Chairman of ALSC PS-20 Revision Task Group, Chairman of ALS Enforcement Subcommittee (for nearly 30 years!), Chairman of the National Lumber Grades Authority (NLGA) NGR Committee, Director of the NLGA Board of Directors for 15 years, Chairman of the NGR Inspectors Task Group, member of the Canadian Lumber Standards Accreditation Board (CLSAB) and Chairman of the Softwood Export Council (SEC).

George loved sports and was a season ticket holder for the Seattle Seahawks and Seattle Mariners for many years, but he especially loved his Oklahoma State Cowboys. When he wasn't watching a sporting event, George enjoyed reading and spending time in Arizona and Maui with Sybil.

George is survived by his wife of nearly 68 years Sybil, their two sons Jeff (Carrie) and Kevin (Rhonda) Thompson, and four grandchildren Michelle, Brian, Kendal, and Tanner Thompson.

Those who knew and worked with George will remember him as a kind and honest man, a true gentleman, and highly respected industry leader. He will be dearly missed by those whose lives he touched.