

Betty and Sterling were born and raised in Danville, Illinois. They migrated to the West Coast during World War II, both working for North American Aviation. They moved to Santa Fe Springs in 1955 and became active in the movement for the City's incorporation. After the incorporation, Betty became the City's first Mayor and was also the first woman Mayor in Los Angeles County. She has served in many capacities in the League of California Cities and the National League of Cities, and her involvement over the years in Community, Local Governmental, State Governmental, and National Civic and Governmental activities is extensive.

During the years that Betty has been involved in local, national and international organizations, Sterling has supported her and shared her love of Santa Fe Springs and her enthusiasm in helping it grow. Until his retirement in 1978, he had worked as Head of Accounting for A. O. Smith Company and Gorham Bronze, and as Controller for Richmond Screw Anchor Steel Company. During Betty's convalescence from a total of nine surgeries for broken hips, Sterling served as cook, maid, chauffeur, and official purse-carrier when she was on crutches. When she was confined to crutches or a wheelchair, he made sure that she got to City Council Meetings on time and transported her to and from City Hall so that she could carry on her duties as a member of the City Council. Before his retirement, he often used his personal vacation to travel with Betty to attend various meetings. Betty says that if anyone deserves this award, it should be Sterling. He has spent the last 28 years supporting her activities, sharing and helping her when possible, and giving her moral support at all times.

Betty and Sterling have two children, Jacqueline and Bob, three grandchildren, and one great grandchild. They both enjoy golf and travel.

by John Nairn
1985

Background Information

STERLING C. WILSON

Native of Illinois

Attended schools in Danville, Illinois and the University of Illinois at Champagne-Urbana

Began his career as an accountant with E. I. Dupont at their Ordnance Plant in Indiana and was later transferred to their plant in Hanford, Washington.

After moving to Southern California, Sterling became a cost accountant for North American Aviation, working there until the end of World War II.

He joined A. O. Smith Company as Head of Accounting and worked there until they moved to Erie, Pennsylvania.

He worked 9 years as Head of Accounting for Gorham Bronze, leaving to become Controller for Richmond Screw Anchor Steel Company where he stayed until retirement in 1978.

by John Navin

1985