

## OBITUARY



PETER J. HERLAN (1909-1977)

Peter J. Herlan, Curator of Natural History at the Nevada State Museum, three times host of meetings of the Lepidopterists' Society, and highly respected member of the Pacific Slope Branch, died 4 April 1977, at age 67.

Peter Herlan was born in Seattle, 14 December 1909. He majored in botany at the University of Washington, where he was a member of the swimming team and played football on a Rosebowl team. He served as a seaman in the Merchant Marine and as an Inspector for Boeing Aircraft. During the Second World War he enlisted in the Air Force, served as a gunner, and was wounded in action.

He moved to Nevada in 1946 on the advice of an Air Force physician, for the benefit of the dry climate on his wounds.

He first worked for the Nevada Museum as a driver of a mobile unit for museum exhibits that toured the state. He later became Curator of Natural History. He had extensive field experience with plants, birds, and mammals, but was best known for his work with insects, especially the butterflies. He led numerous field expeditions for the Nevada Museum. Upon the retirement of James W. Calloun as Director of the Museum in 1973, Peter Herlan was Acting Director of the Museum for two months, until a permanent Director was chosen.

Under Peter Herlan's direction, the collections and exhibits of the Nevada State Museum were greatly enlarged and improved, and extensive cooperation between the various museums and with the University of Nevada was maintained, so that exhibits were set up for public viewing. He also was instrumental in backing conservation legislation at the state level.

Peter Herlan described one butterfly subspecies, naming the very distinctive *Limenitis archippus lahontani* Herlan (1970 [1971]; J. Res. Lep. 9: 217-222). He has had one named in his honor, *Phyciodes orseis herlani* Bauer, and another has been proposed by Kurt Johnson (in press).

Pete, as he was affectionately known to his many friends and colleagues, was the only truly active lepidopterist residing in Nevada. Under his leadership, the meetings of the Lepidopterists' Society were held three times in Carson City with the Nevada State Museum as host. The Pacific Slope Meetings were held there in 1964 and in 1976. The combined National and Pacific Slope Meetings were held there in 1970.

Pete's knowledge of the remote corners of Nevada, and his and Barbara's hospitality, made the Nevada Museum, and at times the Herlan's home, the point of departure for many collectors visiting Nevada. Pete worked closely with many other students of butterflies, including David Bauer, the late O. E. Sette, and others; and the results of their studies have done much to help clarify the problems relating to Nevada Lepidoptera.

Pete was a loyal friend, one of nature's gentlemen, cheerful, outgoing, and always willing to help. He will be greatly missed by all who were fortunate enough to have known him.

He is survived by his wife Barbara, of Carson City, and by three sons, several grandchildren, and two sisters.

J. W. TILDEN, *125 Cedar Lane, San Jose, California 95127.*