

Raymond Conaway Obituary

Long time Barstow resident and local woodworker Raymond "Ray" L. Conaway died Monday Sept. 24, 2001 in Camarillo. He was 93. Conaway moved to Barstow in 1925 from Kern County at the age of 17. He began working here for Railway Express, and stayed with that company for 47 years. When Conaway first got to Barstow, he took up woodworking as a hobby. He turned his garage into a woodshop. "I decided I didn't want to hang around pool halls, so I bought myself a lathe," he once said. A self-taught craftsman, Conaway made things out of local woods such as mesquite. He made his own tools. His specialty was wooden gavels. He would give them away to public office holders. Conaway was honored in 1990 with a plaque recognizing his contributions to the city of Barstow. Conaway was born on March 30, 1908 in the Randsburg area of Kern County. He moved to Barstow after having worked for his uncle in freighting in Kern County, said local historian Bob Hilburn. Conaway also volunteered time teaching woodshop classes at Barstow High School. Conaway loved woodworking. "Woodworking keeps me out of meanness," he once said to a reporter for the Desert Dispatch. He is survived by his wife, Rosalie Conaway of Barstow; sons Charles F. Conaway of Aurora and John R. Conaway of San Jose; daughters Ruby Lassanyi of Arcadia, Christina Conaway of Camarillo and Dr. Mary Ellen Conaway of Madras, Ore., seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Mass will be held at 11 a.m. Friday Sept. 28, 2001 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 555 E. Mountain View St. Disposition will follow at Mountain View Memorial Park, 37067 Irwin Road.

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