

Richard Quig Roelofs

(December 14, 1928 - October 13, 2014)

Richard Quig Roelofs, 85, passed on in the early hours of Columbus Day; a fitting day as it is a holiday that celebrates a journey as well as the courage, strength and grit it takes to travel into a large expanse of the unknown. During the time of his death, his wife Marilyn and his only child Michelle were blessed to be at his side.

Richard was born December 14, 1928 in Logan Township, Pennsylvania and was

the youngest of three children. As a young child he first attended the two-room schoolhouse in Scotia, Pennsylvania where his parents operated a seafood restaurant in the surrounding rural farm community. His family kept up this restaurant during the early days of the Depression, but by 1939 his father felt the restaurant was on the verge of failing and they decided to move the family to Detroit, Michigan.

Richard was an avid reader, loved learning and was especially good at mathematics. He was accepted into Cass Technical High School in Detroit, graduating in 1946 and then moving on to enlist in the Officers' Naval Aviation College Program to become a naval pilot. The first part of the program was held at Michigan State University and the flight training was in Pensacola, Florida. It was during these years that Richard put his love for science and mathematics into the world of flight, mechanics and navigation. When the Korean War started he joined the Coast Guard, with his last tour of active duty on the Great Lakes of Michigan where he grew to love travelling by water as much as navigating by air.

After the war he returned to his beloved Michigan State, graduating in 1957 as a Mechanical Engineer and in 1960 receiving his Professional Engineering Certification, which landed him a job in the Chrysler Missile Division. At this time the space program was just beginning and Chrysler Corp. was contracted to work with NASA. Richard was proud to be a part of the first USA foray into outer space travel and became part of the team that tested and developed the launching of both the Redstone and Jupiter missiles.

It was during these years that he met Marilyn A. Flannery through a date - set up by a fellow Russian engineer at the space program. They were married on February 22, 1963 and recently celebrated 51 years together- sharing a life long love for travel and the glory of the United



States terrain.

Later in his career Richard worked on developing the first gas turbine engine for Chrysler, and as a Chrysler Executive Engineer he worked on various developments for the next 28 years until he retired and moved to Maine.

Never one to be without a project, Richard was most at peace when working on building or fixing something. His first retirement project involved building a post and beam home on Gouldsboro Bay; he did everything from floors to plumbing to electrical work, with his wife Marilyn as Construction Assistant. But after a few years they both felt it was too remote for the long term, so they sold that home and built another home of equal size and grandeur in Pownal, Maine.

It is a rare person that can take on such big projects with a logical, unflappable perseverance. Richard was a calm, methodical person who believed obstacles were meant to be overcome. He had a subtle humor and loved Monty Python as much as he loved the Smothers Brothers. Even though his last months were fraught with strokes and physical challenges he still managed to appreciate a humorous comment or situation...and to enjoy a Michigan State football team victory on T.V. He was eager to hear about a new job or a soccer assist by his grandchildren. Most of all he was able to convey that he loved and believed in all of us- his grandchildren Jacob and Rosa, his son-in-law Marc Lesperance, his daughter Michelle Lesperance and his devoted wife of 51 years, Marilyn Flannery Roelofs. Hopefully we can follow his example, for he left this world knowing in his heart he never shied from the words "I love you."

Because of his unselfish loving spirit we will miss him dearly until we meet again in Heaven. He is predeceased by his mother Gladys Quig Roelofs and father William H. Roelofs as well as his sister Rosalie Roelofs Ellis and brother William H. Roelofs II.

In addition to his immediate family members, he is survived by his dear nephew Jeff, as well as Susan, David and Matt Ellis and their families. He is also survived by his nieces and nephews Debbie, Kurt and Wendy Roelofs and their families.

The family wishes to thank all of the nursing staff at Seal Rock Healthcare for their kindness, spiritual support, unwavering patience and care they showered on our family

A quiet celebration of his life will be held for family, neighbors and friends on

Veteran's Day, November 11 at Joseph's by the Sea in OOB.

A Funeral Mass will be held at Sacred Heart Church in Bad Axe, Michigan on July 11, 2015 with burial at Sacred Heart Cemetery immediately following.