



Kenneth Neumann

May 5, 1926 - December 16, 2019

Kenneth Neumann passed away at the age of 93 on December 16, 2019. He is survived by his five sons—Greg, Doug, Mike, Grant, and Reid—four daughters-in-law, one son-in-law, seven granddaughters, three grandsons, and two great-grandchildren.

Ken was born to Dorothy Hartman Neumann and Stanislaus Neumann in Denver, Colorado, on May 5, 1926. He was the youngest of three brothers. He graduated from Denver North High School in June 1944 and immediately was accepted by the Navy for officer training. On D-Day, he was struck by polio and entered the hospital where he spent much of the following year. He later received an honorable discharge for his condition.

After the war, Ken attended the University of Colorado Boulder, where he received a BS in engineering on June 10, 1950. A member of Sigma Nu, he and his fraternity brothers often serenaded the young women of Delta Gamma from the front lawn of their sorority. He got to know one of these women, Jo Ann Gardner, at a “beer bust” while in college. She would later become his wife.

After graduation, Ken went to work for the Bureau of Public Roads, surveying mountain roads in Colorado and Texas, often camping out in the mountains for weeks at a time. He returned to Denver and married Jo Ann on October 18, 1952. He and Jo Ann moved westward to San Mateo, California, where they raised five sons, and six consecutive cats.

After working for a number of structural engineering firms, Ken joined Shapiro, Okino, Hom, and Associates (SOHA) in 1971, which provided seismic resistant design for new buildings, and seismic evaluation and rehabilitation of existing buildings. In 1977 the Kenward S. Oliphant Memorial Award for Engineering Excellence, given by the Consulting Engineers Association of California, was awarded to SOHA for Ken's innovative seismic retrofit of the historic Mission High School façade. The judges noted: “In an exceedingly adroit application of structural engineering principles, [SOHA] subtly introduced a new seismic-resistant wall system braced and anchored to the historic school's 130-ft. decorative tower, preserved the column-free, 1,750-seat auditorium, and

saved more than 1,000 pieces of heretofore dangerous cast-stone ornamentation on the building's façade." After a professional career spanning more than forty years, Ken retired on February 7, 1992, and resumed an old passion from his school days: watercolor painting.

Ken experienced two great losses in his life. On April 18, 1985, Jo Ann died after thirty-three years of marriage. He was remarried in 1989 to Elizabeth "Betty" Fairweather. They lived in Burlingame and traveled abroad frequently until her death in 2012. In his new home at Sterling Court in San Mateo, he charmed many a resident.

Ken was a man of many interests: science, art, history, politics. He played the trombone in a marching band when he was young. He had a passion for jazz and classical music, and loved going to the opera. A prolific artist, he worked in oils, charcoal, and pencil, and his watercolor canvases have been displayed at various locations around the San Francisco Peninsula. He enjoyed hosting parties (with Jo Ann, then Betty) and working the grill on Fourth of July. He loved peanuts and chocolate mint. He was a huge SF Giants and Warriors fan. A lifelong Democrat, he read *The Nation* and loathed today's GOP. "Mitch McConnell should be marched out of the Senate chamber in handcuffs." He possessed an agile wit and a sharp mind for numbers and often burst into song. He will be missed by all who knew and loved him, especially his five boys.

Cemetery

Skylawn Memorial Park

Hwy 92 at Skyline Blvd.

San Mateo, CA, 94402