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Dick Swart

Richard "Dick" Swart Jr. '56

Hood River

August 4, 1934 - January 4, 2019

Richard "Dick" Swart Jr. passed away on Jan. 4, 2019, at Providence Hood River Medical Center in Hood River, Ore. Dick was born on Aug. 4, 1934, and was 84 years of age at the time of his passing.

Dick was born in Upper Darby, Penn., to Richard Swart Sr. and Katherine "Kitty" Ewing Swart. He was a graduate of Williams College ('56), where he studied art history and was active in drama and the Theta Delta Chi fraternity. He was an ardent attendee to each reunion, showing up in his Williams tie, leading the fight songs, and regularly challenging conventional thought with his posts to the EphBlog.

Dick was a classic ad man and marketing executive with his iconic hats and briefcases, having worked for BBDO, 3M, Carmichael Lynch, Parker Pen and Martin Communications in New York City, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Oregon, and later as a field interviewer for the Census Bureau.

He integrated his artistic knowledge and humor into his campaigns and was responsible for updating and rolling out the 3M logo internationally. As vice president of international marketing for Parker Pen, he developed a lifetime interest in the aesthetics of fountain pens and the advertising and design used to market them. A calligrapher himself, he used his skills to address his children's wedding invitations.

An extensive traveler, he loved nothing better than to wander through the big cities and small towns in Europe, exploring the architecture, enjoying museums for the feel of the spaces as well as the art on the walls, finding the "fun stuff" in town, sampling the local specialties and settling into a good spot to watch the world spin by.

A 25-year resident of Hood River, he grew to embrace the outdoors, from hiking to biking and camping, while maintaining his interest in the arts. He was a regular at the Portland Opera and the Columbia Arts Center, where there is a seat in his name now for future patrons. An ardent supporter and former board member of the Hood River Library, he often sketched the architectural details of the 1921 building.



At 6 feet, 4 inches, he was a larger-than-life character who had an amazing sense of humor, style, and a laser-focused interest in understanding the lives and experience of those around him. With his quick wit, great eye and unmistakable curiosity, he was a delightful conversationalist, especially over his favorite scotch, a pint of beer or perfect Manhattan. He was the kind of guy who finished the NYT crossword puzzle in pen ... every day ... generally without mistakes.

Dick was preceded in death by his sister, Ruth; his son, Martin, and daughter-in-law, Lalitha; and is survived by his children, Garret Swart of Palo Alto; Wendy Swart Grossman and Evan of Brookline, and Richard Swart III and Bonnie of Dubai; his grandchildren, Amy, Luke, Adam, Elliot, Josh, Simon and Dow, whom he was immensely proud and would boast to all that would listen.

There will be a celebration of his life complete with storytelling, music and a showing of his own art work in the summer, along with his curated collection of mid-century modern typewriters, fountain pens and associated ephemera.

In lieu of flowers, Dick would like contributions to be made towards the search for his friend, Max Watson, who is currently missing in Baja California: www.gofundme.com/bring-max-watson-home.

Arrangements are under the direction of Anderson's Tribute Center (Funerals • Receptions • Cremations), 1401 Belmont Ave., Hood River. Visit www.AndersonsTributeCenter.com to leave a note of condolence for the family.

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