



Roc Ritchie Caivano

February 12, 1944 - July 8, 2021

BAR HARBOR - Roc Ritchie Caivano, 77, died at home on July 8, 2021. He was born on February 12, 1944, and grew up in Tarrytown, NY, the oldest of Rocco and Margaret (Ritchie) Caivano's four children.

He attended Dartmouth College '66 and the Yale School of Architecture '70. In 1966, he met his future wife, Helen Lee McGregor, on a blind date at Fat George's Bar in Sleepy Hollow, NY; they were married on November 30, 1969 in NYC. They lived in New Haven while Roc made animated shorts for Sesame Street and The Electric Company. During this time, he made the animated film "Air Conditioned Comfort," which highlighted the perils of consumptive tourism and the wisdom of Smokey the Bear. The film was shown nightly at the Criterion Theater in Bar Harbor throughout the 1980s. After Yale, Roc started a design-build company, Elephant Track Construction, and over the next few years he designed and built houses in Honey Creek, WI, Steamboat Springs, CO, and Erin, NY. In 1974, responding to an ad in the New York Times, he took a position at the College of the Atlantic on Mount Desert Island, where he started the Environmental Design program. During this time, Roc and Helen fully embraced the community that has anchored their happy and meaningful lives. In 1975 their daughter Katharine Starlight was born; their daughter, Lilly McGregor, was born in 1981. Roc was a deeply loving father, "Be careful," and "I'm so damn proud of you" his most common refrains. In 1983, Roc and his family moved to Philadelphia, where he worked for Venturi, Rauch & Scott Brown as an associate for five years. He then joined Lyman Perry Architects as a partner. In 1990 the Caivanos moved back to Mount Desert Island to open Roc Caivano Architects. For the next 25 years he designed several hundred projects, from garden sheds to health centers, summer cottages, year-round houses, and structures in Acadia National Park.

Throughout his life, Roc was an active participant - in the classroom, around the dinner table, at the job site, on numerous non-profit boards and committees, and most proudly as a volunteer fireman with the Bar Harbor Fire Department. Roc used most of his spare time making stuff. He loved to fix, create, and build things - and most of all to paint. After retiring in 2013, when he wasn't converting various rooms in their house to studios, he pretty much painted full time. He was happy and fulfilled with his life, as he was with his partner of 52 years. The true love Roc and Helen shared is legendary to anyone fortunate enough to know them. In November of 2020, Roc was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He was well taken care of by the MDI Hospital and Beacon Hospice communities,

and by his family and dear, dear friends.

Roc is survived by his wife, Helen; his daughters, Kate Macko and Lilly Caivano; his son-in-law, Benjamin Chase Macko; and his beloved granddaughter, Juniper Helen Macko. He is also survived by his brother, Carl and Carl's wife, Nancy Campbell; and by his sisters, Susie Fagan and Donna Caivano.

Please visit the celebration of Roc's creativity on display at the Northeast Harbor Library (ME) for the month of July. A Celebration of Life will be held from 4-6 p.m. Saturday, July 24, 2021, at College of the Atlantic at The Turrets, 105 Eden Street, Bar Harbor.

Donations in Roc's honor may be made to the EdGE Program of the Maine Seacoast Mission, P.O. Box 600, Northeast Harbor, ME 04662 or the Roc & Helen Caivano Scholarship Fund at the College of the Atlantic, 105 Eden Street, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. In lieu of flowers, please take a walk near the ocean with a friend. Arrangements in care of Jordan-Fernald, 1139 Main St., Mt. Desert.



Guestbook

Showing 10 of 13 posts

Helen and family, thanks for sharing the wonderful story of Roc's life. A man of such talent and generosity. He always had a gentle smile on his face and left a beautiful legacy in so many ways. Very sorry for your loss. The community grieves with you. Deepest sympathy.

CHERYL CURTIS

July 12, 2021

In my life, I have met few men with the character of RRoc. He was a friend from the second grade through high school and beyond. I admired him for so many reasons. He was a natural born leader, intelligent and a loyal friend. I love Roc and will miss him till we meet again. Vaya con dios mio amigo.

MILO CUSHMAN

July 11, 2021

May he rest in peace. My thoughts and prayers go out to you and your family. Sleepy Hollow Class of 1962

DOROTHY J TEAHAN MILLIOT

July 11, 2021

I've treasured my friendship with Roc, and feel deeply his departure from this realm. As my mentor at College of the Atlantic from 1978-1980 he gifted me the education, integrity, and artistic perspective to set me off onto a rewarding career. I have never forgotten his warm, engaging smile everpresent in conversation with him, his humility, and remarkable design talents. Truly, he is one of my heroes in life, right up there with Paul Newman and George Mitchell! May his family be at peace.

STEVE DEMERS

July 11, 2021

It is great to see that one of my classmates in the Sleepy Hollow High School class of 1962 has made so many wonderful contributions to society and had a long stable marriage. May God bless the family in this time of loss.

DON GODFREY

July 10, 2021

Roc, Milo Cushman and I spent a weekend at Princeton at the invitation of their football coach in our senior year in High School. The world has lost a shining star.

PETER BARBELLA

July 10, 2021

John and I are deeply saddened by the loss of our friend Roc and deeply saddened for the Gilley Museum for which he had given so much of his talent. We send our loving thoughts to Helen and his family.. Fondly
Kate & John Briggs

KATE H BRIGGS

July 10, 2021

“Let’s do some art” that is how Roc started architecture projects! As an employee of Roc’s I was blessed to be educated in the beauty of not only architecture in our part of the world but the beauty of MDI. He was a mentor and a friend. Watching Helen and Roc as a couple was a stunning example of togetherness that I will never forget. Heartfelt condolences to Helen and your dear family.

CARLA HASKELL

July 10, 2021

Meeting Roc in 1976 when I moved to Bar Harbor is a moment of loving welcome that persisted over the decades. The love of being alive in the moment is the focus he gifted me as we ate supper at his table with our wives, Helen and Lois. I will see you along Ocean's Paths dear friend, thanks to the kindness of your spirit.

CHRIS BUSCHMANN

July 10, 2021

Roc had a very strong impact on my life and taught me a few lessons that I have never forgotten about how to be an individual, and do what you think is right regardless of the "rules". I have remembered him very warmly and surprisingly often over the last 40+ years...I am surprised to realize it has been that long. He was an impressive mentor. Thank you Roc.

BRUCE JONES

July 09, 2021
