



Richard Sanders Herndon

June 22, 1930 – March 13, 2024

Richard (Dick) Sanders Herndon, of Kansas City, MO, passed away Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at a hospital in St. Joseph, MO. Richard was born in Kansas City, MO, June 22, 1930, the third son of Clifton Barnett and Nona Adaline (Sanders) Herndon. His early years were spent in Kansas City, Carthage, and Eldorado Springs before returning to Kansas City where he graduated with honors from Paseo High School in 1948. He then attended Kansas City Junior College for a semester before going to work for Sears. After a year, he chose to go to Albuquerque, New Mexico. While there, he completed and passed a civil service exam and began what would be his life's career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. After two and half years and an approved leave, he sought to pursue a degree in Civil Engineering. He completed his junior college courses in 1954 and went on to receive a BS in Civil Engineering from Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy at Rolla, MO, in 1956. He then completed his education with a Master's Degree from the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1958. His college accolades included memberships in several fraternities: Tau Beta Pi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Chi Epsilon-the National Honorary Society of Civil Engineers Fraternity. Richard worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 43 years, retiring in 1993.

He transferred back to the Kansas City area in 1956 where he met and fell in love with his soul mate, Betty LaRue, who was working as a summer secretary for the corps. They were married September 6, 1958, at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany in Grandview, MO. Richard and Betty eventually became long-time, dedicated members of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Kansas City, MO. Betty preceded him in death on August 3, 2015. Their service over the years included involvement on most committees and they gave generously of their time to that church family. Richard served as both Senior Warden and Bishop's Warden for the church, and many years as lead cantor. Both Richard and Betty were awarded the Bishop's Shield for their long-time devotion and involvement.

Richard was a member of the Knights Templar. Chev. Richard Herndon, GOTJ, and Betty were among the founding members of the Priory of St. Mary the Virgin, the local priory of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem. They joined in 1989. Richard received the Faithful Knight Award in 2021.

Richard was well respected in his field, becoming a life member of the Society of Civil Engineers and was commended many times for his "skill, knowledge and know-how of structural design in the planning and design of complicated buildings and flood control structures." He was instrumental in the planning, design, and construction of the Stockton Dam project.

Richard and Betty very much enjoyed and appreciated the arts, with a particular love of the Lyric Opera. Richard was a part at times of the Kansas City Community Chorus and member of the choir at St. Mary's. He was the consummate DIY guy, having designed, built, modified and maintained the home that he and Betty shared for more than 50 years together.

He was charter member in the Heartland Chapter of the Studebaker Drivers Club and very much enjoyed working on, repairing, and maintaining his Studebaker Avanti and Hawk models.

Richard was preceded in death by his parents, Clifton and Nona, his wife, Dr. Betty LaRue Herndon, brothers, William F. and Clifton B., Jr. (infant). He is survived by nieces, Donna Unruh (Roger) and Nancy Lock (Larry), of St. Joseph, MO, nephew, James Herndon (Shelby), of Venice FL.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 24th St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1307 Holmes, Kansas City, MO. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to St. Mary's Episcopal Church or to University of Missouri School of Science and Technology at Rolla, MO. He was a good and kind man who will be missed.