



In Memoriam Passings August – September 2024

(YAM Mar-Apr 2025)



Richard Streit Hamilton died in a Manhattan hospital on September 29, 2024. Richard entered Yale at 16 and graduated in 1963. He received his Ph.D. in Mathematics from Princeton in 1966. Richard taught mathematics at Cornell University, the University of California at San Diego, and beginning in 1998 at Columbia University. In 1982 Richard published his theory of Ricci flow, a model for understanding how irregular shapes can smooth themselves out, evolving into spheres. Richard hoped that his theory could be used to solve the Poincaré conjecture, which hypothesized that any finite and closed three-dimensional shape could be deformed or stretched into a perfect sphere. In 2002 a Russian mathematician, Grigori Perelman, proved the Poincaré conjecture with the aid of Richard's theory. Perelman was awarded a \$1 million Millennium Prize for his proof, but refused it on the ground (among others) that Richard should have shared it. Richard received many awards for his work, including the Shaw Prize in 2011. He is survived by his long-time partner, Susan Harris, and by his son Andrew.

Mike Griffel writes: “Richard Hamilton was my roommate for all four years of college. He was also an usher at my wedding and a close friend in our early years after Yale. From the start, it was clear that Richard was a mathematical genius, destined for highly significant achievements in his field. His loyalty to me and support of my own endeavors in the field of classical music were unwavering and ever-present, and we shared many moments listening to great recordings in our dorm room. Richard had a wry sense of humor, an abundance of integrity, and a warm heart for the people about whom he cared, and I am proud to have been one of them.” **Sutton Keany** remembers: “Dick Hamilton, Mike Griffel, **Phil Pechukas**, and I were roommates for three years. Dick was a mind among minds: startlingly bright, intensely curious, generous, with a wonderful slightly-off-center sense of humor. It was just a toot to have been able to spend four years in his company.” **Jack Plotkin** recalls: “In Senior Year I had a class in which Hamilton was a fellow student. Felix Browder (a great teacher, by the way) offered a new course (I believe it was entitled Analytical Methods) that turned out to be a graduate level class in disguise. Hamilton's ability to follow everything and offer suggestions when a lecture hit a speed bump was uncanny.”

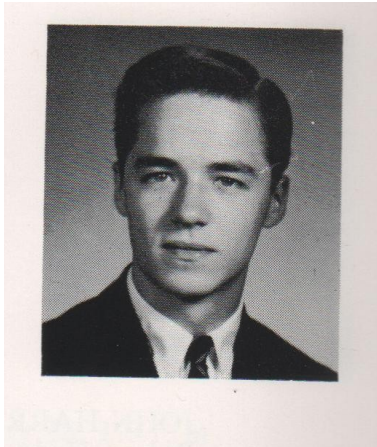


George Wright Hamlin, IV passed away peacefully on October 24, 2024 in his home surrounded by family. George graduated from Yale University in 1963 with a degree in physics.

At Yale, he was a member of the Whiffenpoofs. From there, George embraced his love of flying and joined the U.S. Air Force, where he served three tours in Vietnam, completing more than 100 combat missions and receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross, along with ten other medals. George graduated from the University of Virginia Law School in 1973, and practiced for six years with the Rochester, NY firm of Nixon, Hargrave, Devans & Doyle. George took the helm of Canandaigua National Bank & Trust in Canandaigua, NY in 1979, embarking on a 45-year journey that saw the bank grow from \$85

million in assets to \$4.9 billion by 2023. “To put it mildly, my father was larger than life,” said his son Frank Hamlin, III. “He proudly wore his love for the bank on his lapel,” referring to the iconic “I Love My Bank” button that George wore regularly. George is survived by his wife of 58 years, Mary (Morrison) Hamlin; three children, Sherrod Smeenk, Frank Hamlin, and Alex Hamlin; and five grandchildren.

Tony Elson recounts: “George and I became friends through our singing together in the Yale Glee Club and Whiffenpoofs. He was an enthusiastic member of both groups and greatly enjoyed the camaraderie associated with group singing. George regularly took voice lessons in order to develop and further strengthen his voice. This training gave strong support to his becoming a soloist in the Glee Club in our Senior Year.” **Bill Reed** writes: “George and I became good friends early in Freshman Year while we were both ‘rushing’ singing groups. George joined the Bakers Dozen, I the Spizzwinks. We were in the Glee Club together and later, the Whiffenpoofs. George was deeply invested in singing. He sang carefully, accurately, and well. George was very smart, majored in physics, and always had interesting opinions.” **Dan Rowland** recalls: “I talked often with George about his family bank. What I loved and respected about these conversations was that he saw the bank primarily as a community service crucial to each of its communities. George based the whole philosophy of his rapidly growing bank on the very personal relationships and community knowledge of his bankers. When the Whiffs gathered in Vermont to rehearse and sing, George would keep us breathless as he told us about his hair-raising experiences flying over 100 missions over Vietnam, piloting his plane around severe storms and through enemy fire to land safely over and over on the heaving and constricted runway of his aircraft carrier base.” **Gurney Williams** shares: “George did all he could to be with us Whiffs, worked hard and happily to sing well, and showed up at the last Reunion when he could hardly walk (having flown from Canandaigua to Connecticut).” **Lea Pendleton** adds: “My wife and I also rented the little cottage behind George’s lakefront home for summer vacations until we moved to Marblehead in 1978. We spent many nights on his porch enjoying a fire on his beach and looking at the lake along with our kids. He was always a friendly, welcoming guy.”



Charles Lawrence (“Larry”) Irwin died on September 11, 2024. Larry attended Yale University, graduating with a degree in Economics in 1963. He founded Irwin Alloys and Raw Materials, trading in ferro-alloys, scrap, and coal. With the decline of the steel industry, he joined Veka Inc. as President. He retired in 2002 and moved to Brays Island in Sheldon, SC, where he enjoyed hunting with his German Shorthaired Pointers, shooting sporting clays, trapping, fishing, and golfing. Larry also thoroughly enjoyed his four hunting trips to Africa. He is survived by his wife, Daphne (Johnsie) Irwin; his son, Charles Irwin; his daughter, Alison Lally; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.



Gordon Iverson Kuster, M.D. died of pancreatic cancer on September 24, 2024 in Pittsfield, MA. He graduated from Yale in 1963, and from Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1967. He completed his residency at Harlem Hospital and Yale New Haven Hospital. Gordon’s professional life was rooted in his 37 years at Griffin Hospital in Derby, CT as a physician practicing psychiatric medicine. For 13 of those years he was Chairman of the Psychiatry Department. In addition, he supervised psychiatric residents and medical students at Yale for over 25 years, and consulted at York Correctional Facility as a court-appointed Special Master for 23 years. While in college, Gordon was proud to row on Yale’s Varsity Heavyweight Crew, and after his medical training he returned to his love of rowing.

He joined the New Haven Rowing Club where he competed in the Masters Division at national and international venues for 28 years. In December 1964, Gordon married Sandra Senfleben, and their Orange, CT home became the central point for hosting many Yale/Harvard tailgating parties. Gordon was an avid audiophile and loved all types of music from Bach to Bruce Springsteen, but he particularly appreciated classical music. When he and Sandi were not at home, they often could be found traveling the world to explore museums, landmarks, and concert halls. Gordon is survived by his wife of 60 years, Sandra Kuster; his children, Cheryl K. Clarke and Steve Kuster; and five grandchildren.

Ted Murray shares: “Gordon and I were roommates with **Bill Sanford** and **Jack Smart** in Pierson for two years. I also rowed on heavyweight crew with Bill and Gordon. I remember that in the varsity crew, because of his size and strength, Gordon typically rowed in the #5 or #7 seat, that portion of the shell known as the “engine room.” But for all his imposing size, Gordon was a gentle giant: one of the most compassionate and sensitive classmates I knew, a wonderful and thoughtful person to talk with, and perfectly suited for his subsequent career in psychiatry. In recent months when I visited Gordon and Sandi, even as he bravely faced his illness, he was a radiant presence of thoughtful and

uplifting conversation.” **Craig Cooper** recalls: “Gordon was my confidante. I trusted him, respected him and loved him as a brother. Gordon was great fun, optimistic, kind, and the adult in the room when necessary. Those who knew him benefited greatly.” **Tom Iezzi** writes: “Gordon and Sandi were our neighbors when we lived in Orange, Ct in the 1970’s. They were great hosts at our football tailgates and the after-game parties at their home. Gordon and I were tennis doubles partners and singles players. He was respected for his wicked first serve, which required standing back a foot or two behind the base line. When we played I looked forward to his second serve, more relaxed and one I could return.” **Jay Rixse** remembers: “Gordon was a kind and giving person. Gordon and I first met as members of the Freshman Heavyweight Crew. Gordon amazed us Freshman Year by his growth spurt of 4 inches and about 25 pounds. Our friendship grew as we all continued our years together with the Varsity Crew and in Pierson. We all kept in touch throughout the years. Friendships born at Yale last!”



Robert Anthony Rosati, M.D. passed away on July 23, 2024. He graduated from Yale University with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry and Duke Medical School, where he joined the faculty in 1971. There he served as the first director of the Duke Databank for Cardiovascular Disease, one of the first efforts in the country to use computers to manage and investigate data on patient outcomes. In 1991 he became director of the Rice Diet Program, convinced by his experience with the database that diet was the most effective treatment for cardiac disease. Robert is survived by his wife Kitty, his children Francesco, Ken, and Robbin, and five grandchildren.

Doug Dick remembers Bob Rosati as follows: “Bob was my suitemate for four years. He was very smart, and was happy to share his knowledge. I particularly remember borrowing some of his class notes for a course we were taking in nonparametric statistics. I not only passed it, but did well, because of those notes! Bob had a fun, droll, sense of humor. After Yale, we lost touch with each other for a long time. But fortunately we reconnected, and more recently had dinner, along with his lovely wife Kitty, at their home in Durham. We had planned to get together again, but waited too long.” **Geoff Martin** writes: “I greatly admired the way that Bob handled things I did not. He was an athlete way beyond me. His sense of humor was way beyond mine, but I could keep up. Bob was brainy, for sure, and I rarely forgot how he carried it into strong success with people in need.”



John Harman Sterne passed away on May 19, 2024 at Cape Cod Hospital. John lived in many places, residing for the longest times in the Boston area, the Washington, DC area, and Brewster, MA, to which he retired some 20 years ago. He was a proud Veteran, having served in the Navy as a supply officer on the USS Caloosahatchee after graduating from Yale University. After his time in the Navy, John spent the rest of his professional career in the aviation industry. He was a lifelong sailor and enjoyed taking his beloved Beetle Cat “Magical” out on Cape Cod Bay off the beaches at Brewster, and then in the last few years out to Pleasant Bay from Arey’s Pond. John is survived by his wife, Gail Binney Sterne; two sons, a stepdaughter, and a stepson; four grandchildren; and four step-grandchildren.

Dick Ahlborn remembers: “John and I were classmates at Kent and roommates at Yale. To expand on his lifelong love of aviation: John got his first private pilot's license at 16 and his instrument rating a couple of years after that. While we were at Yale he took acrobatic lessons at a dirtstrip outfit north of New Haven in an old Stearman Biplane – a cloth model with a huge radial piston engine in the front, with all the power needed to do loops, rolls, even hammerhead stalls. After he was allowed to solo, I went up with him and loved the thrills he provided. Our last flight ended with his clipping the top few feet out of a poplar tree just before landing, which (riding in the front seat) I only realized when I saw twigs and leaves in the wire struts that connected the wings. That was the last time he was welcomed at that location and marked the end of our aerial outings. John was a great guy to have as a friend and roommate.” **Victor Sheronas** writes: j “John and I both went to The Haverford School until we went away to boarding school. During grade school, John was my best friend; whenever I could, I'd ride my bike nearly two hilly miles to his house. Like Dick Ahlborn, I also took a flight with John. Unlike Dick, there were no acrobatics!”



John A. Tyler passed away on passed away on September 20, 2024 with his loving family at his side. John received an Accounting Degree from Bentley University in 1961 and a Bachelor's Degree from Yale in Economics in 1963. In 1968 John passed the CPA exam and began a successful career as an accountant. He worked for various firms and managed the Boston office of Laventhol, Krekstein, Horwath & Horwath. John realized his dream of running his own business by founding an accounting firm in Cambridge, MA in 1976. John was known for his abundant generosity, as well as his passion for reading, genealogy, and history. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Judith (Cirello) Tyler; his daughters, Lola (Laura) Tyler Eck and Elisabeth Tyler de Vries; his son, Robert Tyler; and five grandchildren.



H. F. (“Frank”) Wentholt died suddenly at his home on September 25, 2024. He departed without fanfare, sentimentality, or fuss. Frank attended Yale University (1963) and Hastings School of Law (1970). For many years he worked as a lawyer at his Redwood City based law firm (Wilhelm, Thompson, Wentholt, and Gibbs), with a specialty in family law. He was proud also to have served in the U.S. Marine Corps. At heart Frank was a sailor, and he spent his most cherished times sailing not only on San Francisco Bay but around the world in his own boat and charters. He loved to travel and reflected back often on his travels throughout the world. Frank is survived by his long-time partner, Suzanne Fouts; his loving daughters, Christine Quinn and Nicola Wentholt; and four grandchildren.

Rick Holloway recalls: “Frank was usually cheerful, had a wry sense of humor, and was always up for an adventure. One, in particular, comes to mind. We had driven up to Putney VT to stay with one of his former teachers in order to spend the weekend skiing. At about 2:00 AM, Frank woke me up to say that his host’s wife was about to give birth and since his host’s car wouldn’t start, we would have to drive our host’s wife to the hospital in Brattleboro. It was quite a drive; snow was falling heavily, the wife was alternately moaning and shrieking, her husband was frantic, but Frank, calm as ever, seemed very much amused by the situation. I imagine he would have remained so even if we had to undertake an emergency delivery in the car.” **Carlyle Hall** adds: “I recall Frank as quiet, thoughtful, kind, and strong. He invariably had his own interesting ‘take’ on current personal and public events.” **Nelson Luria** writes: “Frank loved music and the sound of his record player emerged regularly from his room. He had a wide range of curiosities and interests. Frank loved good wine and a bottle was often open in his room. Frank was unusually loyal to a relatively small group of friends and delighted in talking with them, sometimes arguing to elicit conversation.”

Guy Miller Struve, Secretary

[90 The Uplands](#)

[Berkeley, CA 94705](#)