



Kenneth Merrill Stetson

May 22, 2019

Kenneth Merrill Stetson of West Hartford, Connecticut and Chatham, MA died peacefully on May 22, 2019 surrounded by his family. He was 91 years old. He was born March 20, 1928 at his family home on Wolf Den Road in Brooklyn, Connecticut, the son of Kenneth Gallup and Miriam (Cornell) Stetson.

Ken attended Brooklyn Grammar School and graduated from Killingly High School in 1946. He then enrolled at the University of Connecticut, where he earned both bachelor's (1950) and master's (1962) degrees. He also received a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in 1963 from the University of Hartford.

Through the R.O.T.C. program at the University of Connecticut, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. He served on active duty for three years in Texas, New York, and Massachusetts, and subsequently served in the United States Air Force Reserves for twenty years. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel and the Commander of the 59th Aerial Port Squadron at Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee, Massachusetts.

Ken devoted his career as a science teacher and guidance counselor to the children of West Hartford, where he was employed by the Board of Education for four decades. He began teaching in 1950, and retired in 1991 from Sedgwick Middle School. He was beloved by students and faculty alike. Speaking about the heart of his work with characteristic humility, he reflected, "One of the nicest things I remember was a note I received from a student who simply wrote, 'Thank you for being there'". Ken's warmth and his wise and gentle presence provided guidance and strength to many. In an article about his career published in this paper, he was described as leaving behind a legacy of love.

With the exception of his service on active duty with the U.S. Air Force, he lived in West Hartford from 1950 to 2019. He and his family enjoyed many summers at their home in Chatham, MA, which they shared with his three grandchildren, extended family, and friends. Whether boating on Nantucket Sound, sailing on Pleasant Bay, hiking and exploring by land or by sea the history and geology of the Cape, he especially loved time

outdoors.

An avid traveler and outdoorsman, Ken hiked and camped throughout the country as a young man. Later in life he traveled the world with his family, determined to impart to them his love of nature and history. "It's a great big beautiful world we live in," he was fond of observing. No matter how far he traveled, Ken never forgot the rural beauty of his hometown of Brooklyn, where he returned annually to walk through the woods and fields and along the stone walls of his childhood, often in the company of one or many family members to share his stories and humor. His love for the land and for wildlife resulted in his conservation of much of his forestland and farmland in eastern Connecticut. He captured many of his reflections on his boyhood home in his book, *Small Town, Small Talk*.

Ken joined Emanuel Lutheran Church in Hartford in 1955, where his father-in-law was a minister, and over the years he served on various committees and groups there, including the Church Council. He was a member of several professional organizations and clubs, including the West Hartford Squires.

He was the beloved husband for sixty-four years of Karin (Sandberg) Stetson, cherished father of Anne and David and of David's wife, Claudia, and treasured grandfather of Eleanor, Caroline, Sarah, and Sarah's husband, Joel. He also leaves his sister, Miriam Schings and her husband, Alfred, and many nieces and nephews. Ken was predeceased by his brother, Clayton.

A memorial service to celebrate Ken's life will be held on Saturday, June 15 at 11 am at Emanuel Lutheran Church, 311 Capitol Avenue, in Hartford. Friends may greet family members at a luncheon following the service. Instead of flowers, donations may be made to Emanuel Lutheran Church designated to the Sandberg Mission Fund by mail (311 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106) or electronically at <https://emanuelhartford.org/give-to-emanuel-2/>. For directions and online condolences, please visit www.taylorandmodeen.com.

Events

JUN **Memorial Service** 11:00AM
15

Emanuel Lutheran Church
311 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT, US, 06106

Comments



“ I regret that Father's Day commitments precluded my attending my former colleague Ken Stetson's memorial service today. I was a social studies teacher at former Sedgwick Jr. high school when Ken was a guidance counsellor there. I remember him as a solid no-nonsense practitioner of his trade, friendly and helpful to both colleagues and students, the type of professional that constitutes the backbone of any successful organization. I liked him and am sorry to learn of his passing. Please accept my sympathy. Cornelius (Neil) Lynch

neil - June 15 at 02:47 PM



“ Very shocked to hear of his passing. I know Mr.Stetson as a kind harted man that I have never met but threw his nephew was able to reach out to him and be granted permission for my daughter,son, and myself to enjoy hunting makeing great memories on his property on Plume Rd. in Thompson. I talked to him by phone and kept every letter he has written to us and kind he very much was. He will be very sadly missed by the Eastman's. Thank you Mr. Stetson

Scott Eastman - June 14 at 07:34 PM



“ My name is Heidi Driscoll. My mother, Norma (Field) Wolfe, sister of Joslyn Field, was saddened to hear of Ken's passing. She said my Uncle Jos grew up with Ken in Brooklyn and they both attended UCONN. We are so sorry for your family and are sending are prayers to all of you. We would love the opportunity to ready his book if it is available in print. I can be reached at heididriscoll@sbcglobal.net. Again, we are sorry for your loss, my mom has fond memories of him as a boy. He and Jos used to operate an ice cream stand near the Brooklyn Fairgrounds that Ken built himself!

Heidi Driscoll - June 10 at 01:19 PM



“ so very sad to read of the loss of such a wonderful man ! Mr, Stetson was my guidance counselor @ Sedgwick and was always so kind, pleasant and approachable. My husband later knew him when he did his student teaching there and remembered him as a man of great integrity and dedication...don't meet many like him ! God Bless all of you !
Barbara (Johnson) and Tim Clemens

barbara and tim clemens - May 30 at 09:30 AM