



Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014



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Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 10



Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

Listed below is Mr. Rogowski's Complete Obituary. Following the obituary is the Eulogy from the Funeral Mass as presented by Mr. Charles M. Lizza.

Richard R. Rogowski, 84, of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida and Bethany Beach, Delaware, passed from this life on Thursday, May 1, 2014, following a long illness which he fought bravely. Richard was born in Steubenville, Ohio on December 13, 1929, the son of Joseph Rogowski and Kazimiera Lamparski Rogowski, both Polish immigrants. He spent his early years in Ohio and in Weirton, West Virginia, learning the building trade from his father.

Upon his mother's death at age 13, Richard (also known as "Roger") moved to live with his Uncle Henry Lamparski's family in Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania, where he grew up, built and raced boats, became an expert water-skier and worked in the steel mills near Pittsburgh.

Richard graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1952 with a BS in Civil Engineering. He subsequently earned a Masters degree in Aerospace Operation Management from the University of Southern California in 1970.

From 1952 through 1954, he served as a civil engineer for the US Army Corps of Engineers and worked at Nouasseur Air Base in Morocco. He met his sweetheart, Marie Ohayon, in Casablanca, where they married in 1955. Richard was drafted by the Army in 1954 and actively served for two years.

Richard and Marie moved to Natrona Heights in 1956, where their first child, Sandra, was born. The young family later moved to Alexandria, Virginia, where Eva and David were born, and he and Marie lived until 2002.

Richard seized life with a passion, and his experience and accomplishments are a testament to that. He believed and often stated that "luck is the preparation for, the recognition of, and the seizure of opportunity."



Obituary

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

For more than 40 years, Richard served his country as a civilian in the Department of the Army, primarily at Fort Belvoir, VA and at Headquarters in Alexandria. He assumed a wide variety of positions in scientific and engineering capacities, serving as Director of the Countermine Laboratory, Weapons Systems Manager for Army Mobility Command, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Development, Engineering, and Acquisition at US Materiel Command (AMC and FAST), and culminating as the Senior Executive Service member responsible to the Commanding General for analyzing, developing and integrating Army procurement initiatives for US defense in excess of \$5 billion annually. In these roles, he managed a network of senior scientists and engineers throughout Europe, Panama, Hawaii, Japan and Korea, linked to more than 20 Army research laboratories and development centers. Among his many projects, he established a micro-biological and chemistry laboratory in Bermuda; he managed the construction of large refrigeration, fuel storage and electrical plant generating facilities in Morocco; he supervised the layout of radar sites in Algeria; he was project director for joint US/Israeli heavy mobile equipment development; and he planned and participated in joint US/Austrian mini-helicopter RPV programs in Austria.

All of Richard's work was oriented toward putting the soldier first. He was a true patriot all his life. In 2003, Richard was awarded the Firepower Award by the National Defense Industrial Association, Picatinny Chapter, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to preparedness of the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

After retiring from the Army in 1994, Richard became a consultant/advisor and later a Vice President of BRTRC, Inc., where he helped coordinate efforts for the company in aerospace, ground warfare, robotics and autonomous systems.

In 2001, he left BRTRC to found NIITEK (Non-Intrusive Inspection Technology) with scientist Gunter Wichmann and designed, developed, perfected and commercialized a unique, lifesaving landmine detection device which is now used worldwide and particularly by the US Army throughout the Middle East. The equipment has saved the lives of countless soldiers and civilians. In 2008, he retired again and sold the company to British defense conglomerate Chemring Group which continues to deploy the invention worldwide.

In his spare time, Richard lovingly explored his proud Polish heritage, which led him to identify numerous relatives in Poland and the US whom he has visited many times over the years. He was an avid collector of model trains and shared this passion with his grandsons.



Obituary

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

Above all, Richard deeply loved his wife, Marie, and their family. He was a dedicated father, grandfather and uncle who led his family on numerous vacations throughout Europe, sharing his passion for other cultures. He enjoyed hosting an annual reunion of his extended family in Bethany Beach, Delaware, where he and his wife have maintained a home for almost 50 years. Richard was a masterful storyteller of his many life adventures, which he shared frequently and delivered with a keen sense of wit and humor. He was a man of deep religious faith.

Richard is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Marie Ohayon Rogowski of Palm Beach Gardens, Florida; two daughters, Sandra R. Lizza of Summit, New Jersey and Eva K. Rogowski of DeSoto, Texas; a son, Dr. David R. Rogowski of Centreville, Virginia; son-in-law, Charles M. Lizza and daughter-in-law, Mary K. Rogowski; four grandsons: David and Michael Lizza, and Joseph and Brian Rogowski; childhood "brother" Dr. Don G. Lamparski and his wife, Adele, and numerous cousins, nephews and nieces.

A Mass of Christian Burial will celebrate his life on Thursday, May 8, 2014 at 11:30 AM at St. Ann Catholic Church, 691 Garfield Parkway, Bethany Beach, DE 19930. Interment with Military Honors will immediately follow at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Dagsboro, DE.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to Covenant House New York in memory of Richard R. Rogowski. The address is Covenant House New York, Attn: Creighton Drury, 460 W. 41st Street, New York, NY 10036, or you can visit www.covenanthouse.org and click on "Donate" where you will be instructed how to indicate your gift in his memory.

Words of Remembrance*

RICHARD R. ROGOWSKI

Thank you for sharing in this celebration of Dad's life. I feel very, very privileged to say a few words about my second father, who, as his cousin, Don Lamparski, has said, was not just a great man, but a good man. Dad had so many wonderful attributes, so much knowledge, so much character, insight, energy, charisma and compassion--all in one person. Dad was – and still is – larger than the sum of his life. His life was rich in experience, and we are fortunate that he lovingly and enthusiastically shared so much of that experience – and wisdom – with us. What made him so great and so good? Sandy put it this way: His is a story of achieving the American dream, the son of Polish immigrants, who, by perseverance and intelligence, and a great sense of



Obituary

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

humor, accomplished so much, while keeping family the center of his world. All who know him will remember him. With a smile. Dad's character was formed in the crucible of his youth and forged in the steel mills near Pittsburgh. He was born to hard-working immigrant parents. From his writings – and, as most of you know, there are many – we know he was taught at an early age by his father to straighten nails from old houses, barns and orange crates with which his father built their house. Dad said, "Growing up during that time, I never saw a new nail until I was 12 years old!" Yet, his mother gave soup to beggars who knocked on their door during the depression years of the '30s. Though only with him a short time, she had a tremendous impact on him: she taught him kindness and compassion toward others. Dad never described himself as poor because he, as he said, "always had a roof over his head" – which he thanked God for every time he prayed – and he worked all his life, from his earliest years as a child well into his late 70s. He started a new company in his early 70s! Dad embraced life with passion. He took risks. He was an avid water-skier and thrived in the exhilaration of speedboats. He was a prankster. He would rather ask for forgiveness than permission. He believed in hard work – whether labor of the hands or the intellect – and he was a master at both. He undertook the most difficult job at the steel mill in his late teens – shoveling the sludge at the bottom of the pit – because that job paid the most money. Dad wasted nothing – neither time nor resources. He was self-sufficient in every sense, and he learned that at a young age, too. He was, suitably, an engineer, and there was nothing he could not build, or fix, or figure out. And, as his grandsons know, when he set his mind to do something, it would be done! Dad believed – and often stated – that "luck is the preparation for, the recognition of, and the seizure of opportunity." And, boy, was he lucky in exactly that sense. He met Mom in Casablanca, Morocco and – as the story goes – declared the first time he saw her, he would marry her. And he did. And time and again he wrote, "Marrying Marie was the best thing that I ever did." You see, he filled the loneliness of his childhood with a partner who would share his dreams. Dad's accomplishments in the service of his country (he was a true patriot) are chronicled in the biography you have. Suffice it to say that he led teams of scientists and engineers throughout the world in the design, development, or procurement of everything from belt buckles to missile systems, always putting the soldier first. But his crowning achievement – the formation of NIITEK – and the development and production of a radar device that now saves the lives of countless soldiers and civilians worldwide, is his legacy. That process, with Gunter Wichmann, was two decades in the making. And it came about because of his passion, his intellect, and his sheer force of nature. Dad was a masterful storyteller with an extraordinary sense of wit and humor. And tales of his hard-scrabble youth, his teenage years with Uncle Henry, and the worldwide exploits of his government service provided the fodder for his stories of work on the garbage truck in Natrona Heights, drunken shrimp in Japan, trading mint ginger ale for sunglasses with a Mafia Don, marching bands on the airstrip and bouquets of



Obituary

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

flowers in Italy, even an audience with the Pope for his deputy, Dick Minnis. We'll hear more from Dick in a minute and more of these stories at lunch. Above all (except God) Dad loved his family – Marie, whom he adored, Sandy, Eva, David, Mary Kay, even me, and he was so proud of his grandsons, David, Michael, Joseph and Brian. He planned his year around annual excursions he would lead with us to Europe, including his beloved Poland, to visit all the “new” family members he had uncovered through his ever-ongoing ancestral research. In more recent years, the annual extended family reunion at Bethany Beach was the highlight of his summer. He taught his grandsons how to work with their hands by crafting lamps and bowls on the lathe in his workshop. They rebuilt the boat dock on the canal under his tutelage– no need to employ someone for something you can do yourself. In these ways, and through his myriad stories, he taught all of us the value of hard work and self-sufficiency, the importance of education – he referred to universities as “brain factories” – perseverance, compassion, optimism, humor, and a deep faith in God. That’s what made him a great man and a good man. On the last page of the Mass program is a prayer – A Father’s Prayer. Richard R. Rogowski lived that prayer every day of his life. In the few days since his passing from this life, we received e-mails and letters from all over the world from the many people whose lives he touched. I would like to read from two of them. The first comes from his dear friend of many years, Clair Weiss:

“Dear Sandy, Eva, and David,

I met your dad in May 1960 when I first worked at Fort Belvoir. As I appreciated some of his eccentricities, he was instantly one of my best and most enduring friends, as well as being one of the most interesting and quotable persons I met in my lifetime.

As I carpoled with him and Marie (and several others) for over ten years, it was always a great time together with lots of lively conversation. No subject was off-limits and all sides of a topic were thoroughly explored.

There was never a time that he didn’t bring out how important family meant to him – from growing up with the Lamparski cousins in Pittsburgh to raising the three of you in Alexandria. He held education as a foremost requirement for his family and all of you thrived with this guidance. Another tenant of his belief system was the importance of perseverance in one’s career. He held this quality equal to intelligence in the long run.



Obituary

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

In a world where the words, 'unique' and 'one-of-a-kind' are overused, these words correctly described your dad.

Over the many years I have been retired, I think of him daily! He was indeed a great man.”

The second letter comes from Dick Minnis, his long-time deputy and colleague at Army Material Command:

“Dear Sandra,

I am trying to catch my breath. I had no idea your Dad had been ill. In my mind's eye, I see him still as he was 35 and more years ago and it is nearly impossible for me to think of him growing old. [As Mom said, Dad never realized how old he was!]

Roger's friendship enriched my life beyond measure and brought me a joy that will live in my heart always. The experiences we shared are among my most treasured memories. His inspiration, example, influence and unwavering support shaped all the second half of my professional life and deeply affected me personally. None of my closest colleagues here in Abu Dhabi ever met your Dad, but each knows his name. During the past seven years, they have been repeatedly entertained with stories of our escapades; they have been the constant beneficiaries of much of the wisdom your Dad shared with me, and when we faced difficult challenges here, they always knew that I was asking myself the question, “What would Roger do?”

I well remember Roger's faith in the promise of eternal life in heaven and when I think of his life's work here on earth, of his gentle character, his genius for friendship, his selfless patriotism and his devotion to his wife, his children, his grandchildren and his friends, I recall the words of St. Matthew when he wrote, “Well done thy good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your master.”

Though I am separated from your family by many miles, I want you to know that I join my voice with yours in saying, Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commend you, Roger, Old Friend. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen.



Obituary

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

And may God bless and comfort each of you.

All my love,

Dick”

- Charles M. Lizza
May 8, 2014
[PDF Printable Version](#)



Tribute Wall

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

LS

Lise Steinhauer posted:

Roger and Marie were neighbors of mine in The Isles until I moved in 2010. I am sad to learn of his passing and thank you for this Life Tribute page so I can still offer my condolences. It is interesting how we often know people only during certain passages of their lives. I am glad to learn more of Roger's life here and not surprised about his great accomplishments. I was at a critical time when I met him, and he shared wisdom that I still recall, e.g., to become an expert on one specific thing, then people will need you for that. We shared our interests and knowledge of genealogy and all things German. He loved Marie so dearly. I am grateful to have know them both.

December 28 at 1:10 PM

TF

The Marshall Family posted:

With great sympathy for your loss. Our prayers are with your family. The Marshalls

May 19 at 8:00 PM

SP

Samaya Mercedes Pateras posted:

I have had the good fortune of knowing 'Roger' throughout my life- he was my uncle! Growing up our two families spent many a holiday and many a summer together.....and many other special occasions in between. I have many fond memories from the times we spent together; the things we did and the places we went. Who could forget our trip through mountainous regions of Germany and Austria- what a trip! I have been blessed by the presence of his life in my life; and fortunate to have walked through this life together with him!When I heard of his failing conditioned I was saddened, worried, and torn.When I heard of his passing I was moved to tears; as I still am now (both figuratively and literally). Though he has passed on, the memories of the times we shared live on, and I will cherish them for the rest of my life.My deepest sympathies to his wife, my aunt, Marie; my cousins (Eva, David, and Sandy), their spouses and their families. My heart truly goes out to you all.He indeed was a great and wonderful man.His loss is great.The pain is deep. The memories of the good times we shared live on! and for that I am grateful!

May 7 at 8:00 PM

KP

Kay Pond posted:

My warmest thoughts and prayers are with you during this time of sadness and loss.May the Lord's presence give you much comfort and peace.Love and blessings for dear Eva and her family,Kay Pond

May 6 at 8:00 PM



Tribute Wall

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

GS

Grazyna And Alexander Sandel posted:

Dear Marie, We were privileged to know Roger. He was a kind, noble and generous man. Our thoughts go with you and your family. With our deepest sympathies, Grazyna and Alex

May 6 at 8:00 PM

MO

Mr. & Mrs Kenneth Oscar posted:

All the great memories, especially the European travel and exciting work, will live on.

May 6 at 8:00 PM

DC

Darlene Coleman posted:

Dear Marie, My sympathy and my prayers are with you and your family at this sad time. Love, Darlene Darlene

May 5 at 8:00 PM

AR

Andrew Remson posted:

Frewell, Roger

May 5 at 8:00 PM

TF

Trish Fitzpatrick posted:

Deepest condolences to Sandy, Charlie, David and Michael. I enjoyed reading about this great life. Thinking of you all, Trish and Bill Fitzpatrick and Family

May 5 at 8:00 PM

HJ

Heather And Todd Johnson posted:

Aunt Marie and Family, Our deepest, heartfelt sympathies are with you, as are our thoughts and prayers. Uncle Rog's memory and legacy will live on in each of you. We will regale Mackinley and Elin with stories of Uncle Rog's patriotism and passion. Most importantly they will know of his great love of family and times shared.

May 5 at 8:00 PM



Tribute Wall

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

TA

Tom Aeillo posted:

I met Roger at AMC shortly after I arrived there in 1987. I worked with him both at AMC, and later while he was at BRTRC. Roger knew how to enjoy life and make it fun for others. High energy, always cheerful and smiling, he was great to be around. To his family, please accept my sincerest condolences on Roger's passing.

May 4 at 8:00 PM

TH

Thomas Harrold posted:

David and Mary Sorry to here of your loss

May 4 at 8:00 PM

JN

John & Christie Niehaus posted:

John & Christie Niehaus has sent this Expressions of Sympathy card.

May 4 at 8:00 PM

SS

Sandy Schierling posted:

My heart aches for you in the loss of your father, husband, and grandfather. As Eva has shared with me the wonderful family stories, travels, and love shared between your parents, I pray for peace and comfort that comes from those precious memories. May you feel God's sustaining love now and during the coming days and months.

May 3 at 8:00 PM

JE

Jackie Edmonds posted:

Eva and Rogowski Family,My thoughts and prayers are with you during this hard time. Your strong faith and loving family will sustain you.God bless,Jackie

May 3 at 8:00 PM

VB

Velinda Buchanan posted:

Velinda Buchanan has sent this Expressions of Sympathy card.

May 3 at 8:00 PM



Tribute Wall

Richard R. Rogowski

DEC 13, 1929 - MAY 1, 2014

AB

Art & Islandia Balek posted:

David and the Rogowski family, With sincere condolences for the loss of your father. May the many good memories of your father and your time together console you at this time. Art & Islandia Balek

May 3 at 8:00 PM

JM

Jerry Malakoff posted:

Roger and I go back to my first moving to DC area over 45 years ago. We were co-workers and then he became my boss, but always he was my friend. In my eyes Roger was a great man and accomplished much in his life. I will miss him.y

May 3 at 8:00 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Richard by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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