



James "Mac" Austin McMahon

September 17, 1939 - June 24, 2021

James "Mac" Austin McMahon, age 81, of Arlington, VA, and Lewes, DE, passed away on Thursday, June 24, 2021, at Virginia Hospital Center, in Arlington, VA. He was born on September 17, 1939, in New York, NY, son of the late James Anthony and Anne Marie (Gibbons) McMahon.

Mr. McMahon graduated from Bishop Loughlin Memorial High School in 1957. He held multiple degrees including: a B.A. in Economics from St. Vincent College in 1961 and a Ph.D. in Economics from Boston College in 1969. Mr. McMahon embarked on his career as an Assistant Professor of Economics with Hobart and William Smith College in Geneva, NY. He joined the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, Canada as an Economist, and later took an appointment to the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB). He worked as an Aviation Economist for the Federal Aviation Administration, for 21 years, retiring in 2005.

In retirement, Mr. McMahon's love of aviation continued. He was a certified private pilot and member of the Quiet Birdmen (DCA Hangar). Mr. McMahon volunteered his time and expertise to the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) in Virginia and Oshkosh, WI, and most recently for the Village Volunteers in Lewes, DE. He was a member of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Lewes and a regular student and guest instructor at Osher Lifelong Learning in Lewes. He enjoyed golfing and traveling and had a passion for antique cars, opera, classical music, and helping the homeless.

In addition to his parents, Mr. McMahon was preceded in death by his brother, Michael McMahon. He is survived by his wife, Melcena Gary Clemmons of Arlington, VA; his children: Maureen Garlock of New Market, MD, Jim McMahon of Carlsbad, CA, Sean McMahon of Carlsbad, CA, and Christopher McMahon of Pleasant, Unity, PA; his brother, Terrence McMahon of Buffalo, NY; his four grandchildren; and nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held on Monday, July 26, 2021, at 11:00 AM, at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 2nd Street, Lewes, DE, where friends may visit beginning at 10:00 AM.

Social distancing protocols must be observed, and masks must be worn by everyone participating in any aspect of the service.

All who cannot attend in person are invited to join the services via live streaming by visiting the following link: <https://youtu.be/nmsu-kgCmjo>

Please sign the virtual guestbook located on the tribute page.

Events

JUL **Flowers to be delivered by:** 03:00PM

25
Parsell Funeral Homes & Crematorium-Atkins-Lodge Chapel
16961 Kings Highway, Lewes, DE, US, 19958

JUL **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

26
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Second & Market Streets, Lewes, DE, US

JUL **Memorial Service** 11:00AM - 12:00PM

26
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Second & Market Streets, Lewes, DE, US

Comments



“ Ray lit a candle in memory of James "Mac" Austin McMahon



Ray - October 12 at 02:21 PM



“ I will never forget spending the 4th of July with Pa (Mac). A great memory that I will remember forever was when me, my brother Dylan, and my cousin Austin used to ride in the back of Pa's riley in the Doo Dah parade throwing candy on the 4th of July. I will always love Pa and I miss him tremendously.

- Raylee R. Garlock

Raylee - October 08 at 09:25 AM



“ I had the privilege of working and traveling with Mac on several projects for the FAA. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with him, as his warm, engaging, and playful spirit was evident even when working on rather technical reports. I felt lucky to have had that wonderful professional relationship.

I have a distinct memory of Mac in his office, listening to a voicemail from Gary, with a look of rapt love and appreciation on his face. He then replayed it to himself to re-experience that private joy. For me the moment captured something really beautiful about him and his relationship to Gary.

When Mac moved to Lewes, my husband and I would make it a point to swing by his house on our bicycles when we made the circuit from Rehoboth on our summer beach vacations. I was glad to be able to catch him sitting outside several times, talk about old times, and see him looking so happy in his lovely garden.

My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Marlene Mandel - July 26 at 12:15 PM



“ Shelley, Bob, Carrie, Nikki, and Mattie purchased the Sweet Tranquility Basket for the family of James "Mac" Austin McMahon.



Shelley, Bob, Carrie, Nikki, and Mattie - July 23 at 10:14 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of James "Mac" Austin McMahon.



July 22 at 11:09 AM



“ Lewes will not be the same without Mac! He loved, loved, loved sitting on that front porch. And I loved sitting on that front porch with him where we would talk about everything and nothing. I will miss receiving hard copy magazine articles, mostly from The New Yorker, that he thought I would enjoy, which of course I did. I will miss him asking me my opinion on Turkish politics, which I didn't even realize I had. He dug deep! I will miss discussing blondes vs brunettes – I could not convince him to choose Audrey Hepburn over Grace Kelly – the gentleman preferred blondes. He remains the only person who seemed genuinely impressed that I could still do a cartwheel and often remembered to ask me if I could still make the claim, giving me a hard time about my lack of technique. I will miss reminiscing about how he and I secretly plotted together to get Jim a 1967 Mustang – you know that smile he has on his face when he drives the Riley? Well, multiply that by several and you'll know the joy he had driving around that Mustang in California! I will miss his visits to California and observing his interactions with Austin --as if a Lamborghini was ever in either of their futures – but for Mac and Austin, it could happen. I will miss listening to Jim and Mac talk and talk about what they were going to do without actually getting around to doing it – well, sometimes they did. I will miss our oh so many sarcastic, witty exchanges that would likely result in an eyeroll from most anyone else. Simply put, I will miss him. We will miss him.

Caroline McMahon - July 20 at 11:29 PM



“ Jim was a wonderful listener as well as being a great talker! We had many memorable conversations over the decades.

He could tell embarrassing stories on himself, which not many people can do. He'd describe some dumb thing he'd done and find it as funny as you did, perhaps adding an embellishment or two, just to make it funnier.

He could be seemingly merciless about razzing you for a short, missed putt, but make up for it by shanking his next drive. It seemed only fair to him to give you a chance to razz him back. Once I figured out his game, I would just smile. Well, not about the missed putt...

He had a unique way of measuring the suitability of a new waiter or waitress. He would become gruff and contrary, questioning them about items on the menu or feigning annoyance when an item wasn't there that he said should be. He often used his stadium voice for this, which could be unsettling in and of itself. If the waitperson GOT HIM, and pushed back and played along, he was delighted, and they were instantly added to his list of people to request in the future. For the most part, they all eventually got him if they saw him enough. He was hard to forget. I have to believe his little test made them better at their jobs!

At an age when a lot of us are satisfied just to enjoy the things we've already learned, he had an unlimited curiosity about the world and was constantly studying new things, whether it was opera or woodworking. An admirable quality, as a curious mind is an engaging one.

He insisted on making home-made apple pies for Thanksgiving dinner and was on a never-ending quest to make the perfect flaky crust. He'd nailed it long ago but, in his mind, there was always room for improvement. I'll miss those pies, along with the last-minute query about whether or not I had a key ingredient he was missing...

He could wear goofy hats with aplomb and strike the appropriate pose for the camera.

If he noticed a friend needed something fixed, he'd swing into action. One time I brought my sister and brother-in-law to the Lewes house and we immediately noticed my fence gate was missing. My sister asked what I thought had happened to it. I told her my best guess was my buddy Jim had seen it was sagging and took it off to fix it. Not knowing him, she asked, "Would he just go ahead and do that?" As if summoned, his pickup turned onto the street and there was Jim with lumber on the roof of the truck cab, held in place only by his left hand. Yes, he would.

But it wasn't just his friends that he helped. He felt he had been given a responsibility to help others. He genuinely believed that responsibility was why he had been spared so many times from health crises that would have felled less able men. He gave back through St. Peter's, The Village Volunteers, and through the many other relationships he had cultivated over the years.

He used to joke about running for the thankless job of Mayor of Lewes (sorry, Ted).

But I could see it, imagining the City Council meetings being a huge draw on YouTube long before the pandemic turned the world Zoomie. He'd have been thoughtful, just, and hilarious. Ah, well.

He adored his family. If the phone rang while we were at dinner, he'd look at the number and say, "Gotta take this, it's my honey." I wish you could have seen his smile at those moments, Gary. He was proud of his kids and worried about them like all good dads do. He wanted the best for them and counted on them to do their best.

He was a confidant, a consoler, a cheerleader, a kidder, a shoulder to lean or cry on, an advisor, a loyal and totally trustworthy man with a friendly, open grin that will never fade from memory. He was my dearest friend.

Pam Weller - July 17 at 11:34 AM



“ Grandma MO purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of James "Mac" Austin McMahon.



Grandma MO - July 13 at 08:23 PM



“ I had the privilege of working with Mac at the FAA. He was one of the most sincere, kindest people i ever met. I was fairly young in my career and Mac was always so helpful. He stood up and spoke up when necessary. I have fond memories of him at the FAA. Thanks for being such a great friend.

Paula Martinez - July 12 at 10:05 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of James "Mac" Austin McMahon.



July 08 at 10:48 AM



“ I first met Mac at the annual Brits by the Sea car show held every year at Lewes, De. It is rare to find a fellow Riley owner so I was very happy meet him and discuss our common interest in Riley cars. He was knowledgeable and funny and it was a pleasure to have known him. My prayers go out to his family during this difficult time. RIP Mac.

Gary Watson - July 07 at 08:59 AM



“ Family Members Mac McMahon
In a time of sadness, our memories are a precious gift.
Mac was always an asset and contributor to any of the classes at Life Long Learning, Lewes.
With heartfelt sympathy.
Joan Sciorra

Joan Sciorra - July 06 at 09:33 PM



“ Once Olli starts again I will deeply miss Mac. We would word spar in a couple of classes much to the amusement of our classmates. I will miss his wit and bright smile.

RIP my friend.

Nick Foery



Nick Foery - June 30 at 05:30 PM