



## Robert Burns

December 21, 2022

Rye Beach - Robert Burns, longtime resident of Rye Beach, passed away peacefully on December 21, 2022, with his family by his side. He had turned 90 years old three days earlier.

Bob was born in 1932 in Dobbs Ferry, NY and grew up in Yonkers, NY. He attended Our Lady of the Rosary School and Cardinal Hayes High School where he excelled in cross country and held school records in track. Bob graduated as a Midshipman from King's Point Merchant Marine Academy in 1955 where he rowed on the crew team. He loved to tell stories about where his time at sea took him, including leave time in San Diego palling around with his buddy Regis Philbin.

In his youth, Bob went on several blind dates, however, as his Irish luck would have it, his last date resulted in an introduction to his future wife –gregarious & outgoing Nancy Walker. The happy couple were married in Chappaqua, NY in 1958. As a Naval Architect/ Engineer, he secured a position designing nuclear submarines at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. While house hunting in the area, as native New Yorkers the NH coastline drew them in. Thus, Rye Beach became their home for over 60 years.

For many decades, Bob and Nancy volunteered their time for causes they believed in. One example included establishing a teen “hotline” dubbed the

“Call Me Kids”. This involved installing several incoming phone lines in their finished basement, where teen volunteers would take calls from others who just want someone to listen. In the 1970’s, Bob arranged for former Vietnam P.O.W. Larry Chesley to stay with the Burns family and speak at area schools. Bob and Nancy also worked tirelessly for the Rye Democratic Committee, hosting events for several NH Gubernatorial and Senate candidates.

After Nancy’s passing in 2015, Bob spent his time volunteering as a greeter at Portsmouth Hospital, and also at the oncology infusion unit, which brought him much joy. Most recently he donated his time to GATHER, a hunger-free community in Portsmouth. His hobbies included gardening, painting, reading and creating art with sea glass collected from years of beachcombing at Jenness beach.

Besides his wife Nancy, he was predeceased by his beloved daughter, Karen. Survivors include son Stephen Burns and his wife Maura of North Port, FL, Virginia Burns Steckowych and her husband Craig of Greenland, NH, grandsons Cameron Burns of North Port, FL, and Matthew Steckowych of Ipswich, MA, and granddaughter Kathryn (Steckowych) Sacro and husband Jonas of Glastonbury, CT. He was also blessed with two great granddaughters, Charlotte and Emelia Sacro.

The family would like to thank the kind hearted and compassionate nursing staff at Portsmouth Regional Hospital as well as Tidewell Hospice of Port Charlotte, FL for their loving care of Bob and his family.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, January 12, 2022 at Saint Theresa Church, 815 Central Road, Rye Beach. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited. Burial will be private. In lieu of

flowers, donations in Bob's name may be made to GATHER for a Hunger-free Community- Portsmouth, NH by clicking here (<https://www.gathernh.org/>) or Tidewell Hospice by clicking here (<https://www.tidewellhospice.org/>).

# Previous Events

## Mass of Christian Burial

JAN 12. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Theresa Church  
815 Central Rd  
Rye Beach, NH 03871

# Tribute Wall

GL

“ I did not know Bob well, but Helped him with Rye's senior serve program to help the elderly go shopping. along with Lambert Lang, we visited Bob at St. Ann's in Dover and tried to see him at Sentry Hill in Maine, but it was during Covid and they would not let him out to see us. Bob had told me about his problem with Shingals at Webster, and he was not comfortable with the service there.. Anyway he was a really fascinating man, and we enjoyed his stories about being a marine architect etc.. His memorial service today was super. Garry Layman

---

**Garry Layman** - January 12, 2023 at 02:25 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Robert Burns.



---

January 05, 2023 at 07:27 PM