



Ronald Elden Strahl

February 23, 1942 - August 29, 2017

Ronald Elden Strahl passed away unexpectedly on August 29, 2017. He was a beloved husband, father and grandfather who left us all too soon. Family and friends are devastated by this great loss of life. Ron and Fran had just celebrated 56 years of marriage on August 18th.

Ronald was born in Redlands, California February 23, 1942. He was the oldest child of Rosalie and Elden Strahl. He had two brothers, Nolan and Sheldon and a sister, Rosalyn. He is preceded in death by his parents and brother Sheldon. Ron grew up and attended elementary school through college in Riverside, California.

Ron met Frances (Fran) Sherman in his first year of college in May of 1960 while she was in her senior year of high school. There was no doubt there was an instant connection and they married in August a year later while both were in college and working. Ron and Fran had a special everlasting love that is hard to find. There was no doubt they were best friends as well as husband and wife; they made a great team.

Ron was a brilliant man with a sense of humor to match. He had an inquiring mind which led to his profession as a Mechanical Engineer. On his journey to becoming an engineer, at the age of 15, he built his robot, "Rusty". He was featured in a newspaper article and appeared at several events and even on "The Tonight Show" with Jack Paar. To this day, Rusty is still a member of the family.

At 16, Ron was employed as a draftsman at Tharaidson, Mathewson and Argabright, Consulting Engineers while attending high school. In the next nine years he became a designer, completed his education, and became a California Professional Engineer licensed as a Mechanical Engineer and also as an associate of the firm then known as TMAD. He was also a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Receiving his P.E., Ron was proud to be the youngest licensed engineer in the state of California at that time. He was a hard working student, husband and by then the father of

Darren. He designed systems for hospitals, schools, colleges, banks, restaurants and large commercial buildings but had an artistic flair and an architectural eye for design.

Ron was encouraged by Santa Barbara architect, Don Pederson, to come to Santa Barbara in 1967. He came to Santa Barbara during the week and back home to Redlands on weekends for over a year and a half. That led to the big move in 1969 for the young family of four with the addition of daughter, Melanie. Strahl Associates, Consulting Engineers was established and would remain so for almost 25 years. He was a consultant on many projects for several architectural firms in Santa Barbara and other California cities and had at least one project in 36 other states.

After closing his firm, Ron stepped into a new position at UCSB to assist in the implementation of its just approved (LRDP) Long Range Development Plan. He joined the Department of Design and Construction in 1991 . Over those 24 years at the University he did less in the design field per se and managed designers, contractors and litigation for projects of new buildings and their infrastructure, which comprised of millions of new square footage to the UC campus. He was so proud of his efforts at the University. He enjoyed his work and the people he worked with through the University. It was different from running his own firm but he liked the change and challenges that came with his new role. He was well respected for his many accomplishments and projects. Ron retired from UCSB in July 2015 as the Deputy Director of Design and Construction.

Ron developed an interest in the sport of sailing in the early 1970's. He started sailing Geary 18 sailboats. He thought it would be a good father-son activity. However, Darren wasn't quite ready to race sailboats with Dad, so Mom became the crew. Many regattas on lakes and in the ocean and a multitude of funny and not so funny experiences for the husband-wife team have entertained family and friends in the tales Ron loved to tell. With new baby, Natalie on the way, Darren took over for mom and became Dad's crew from then on.

The family joined the SB Yacht Club and graduated to bigger boats as the family also grew with the birth of their fourth child, Nanette. Ron was active on the Board of Directors and worked his way up to serving as Commodore of the Yacht Club for the year of 1983. That was the year of the "big storm" and the Queen of England's visit. The destructive storm created a huge project of putting the club back in working order. With the help of a strong cadre of the membership, it was accomplished.

The family was also active on the tennis courts at Knowlwood and spent many years playing tennis and swimming in the pool, which produced a couple of competitive tennis

and swim athletes in the family. Even though Ron didn't play much tennis he referred to himself as the "Jacuzzi Coach".

Ron's other interests included cars and music. Ron had a passion for cars, from Woodies to Sports Cars to Exotic and Muscle cars. He was most happy driving his Corvette and passed his love of cars on down to his children and grandchildren. He also played the trombone. He played in the high school marching band and at church. He enjoyed and listened to all types of music and was a big fan of New Orleans Preservation Hall.

Ron's greatest love was his family. He took great pride in his children's accomplishments growing up and in the adults they became. Ron loved his role of "Pepaw" to his ten grandchildren, Matthew, Sarah, Nathan and Nichole Giles; Madison, Andrew, Makenna and Benjamin Tobin; Hunter and Savannah Raad. He spent as much time as he could visiting with them and making every effort to attend their performances, sports events and birthdays whether it was here in Santa Barbara or in Safety Harbor, Florida. He was so proud of all his grandchildren. Pepaw had a special relationship with each one. He will be greatly missed.

Ron leaves behind his loving family, wife, Fran, and children Darren Strahl (Leslie), Melanie Giles (Ian), Natalie Strahl (Eric Raad), Nanette Tobin (Matt), the afore mentioned ten grandchildren, his brother Nolan Strahl (Kathi), his sister, Rosalyn and her family, his brother in law Doug Sherman (Colleen) and several nieces and nephews.

The family is most appreciative and thankful for the valiant efforts of our neighbors and the first responders who were at Ron's side on August 29th. Ron will be forever remembered and deeply missed by all.

A Celebration of Life in Ron's honor will be held at the Santa Barbara Yacht Club on Monday, October 23, 2017 at 3:30pm.

Events

OCT **Celebration of Life** **03:30PM**
23

Santa Barbara Yacht Club

130 Harbor Way, Santa Barbara, CA, US, 93109

Comments



“ Ron was a leading inspiring construction professional , client , mentor and most importantly of all a loyal friend. I continue to be amazed by his intellect an integrity. He was always the smartest man in the room. The construction industry has lost a brilliant man. I have lost a dare friend. Ron you are loved and missed but most importantly not forgotten. My deepest condolences to Fran and your family . My families prayers are with you in this time of deep mourning.
Sincerely,
Murray & Susan Duncan and our team at Murray Duncan Architects

murray duncan - September 12, 2017 at 07:05 PM



“ My sincere condolences to Fran and family. I am devastated to hear of Ron's passing. I worked for Ron for 13 years and I will always remember his intelligence and sense of humor. I last saw Fran and Ron at Karen Ingalls' wake. I have always thought of him over the years and will miss him tremendously.

I remember sailing with Ron on Bob Grant's Firebird and going with the Flatty group several times. After working for Ron for a couple of years, he came by my board one day and asked if I'd like a raise; I said, "Sure.", then he cranked my chair up a couple of inches! When we went to see "Grease" at the SBCC's Garvin Theater, he lent me his well-worn leather jacket so I could do my impression of Fonzie from Happy Days. Another time, he let me drive his 450SLC for a few days before I took it in for service while he was vacationing in Hawaii with the family. I was surprised and pleased that he trusted me with such an expensive car!

I was fortunate to get to work on a variety of projects at Strahl Associates: St. Francis Hospital, UCSB (Library, Campbell Hall), SBCC (TV Studio, Gourmet Dining Room, JSB Café), HS projects (Calabasas HS, SLO HS), CSU Bakersfield, and many other commercial and institutional projects. I gained an enormous amount of knowledge working for Ron, and it has held me in good stead right up to the present.

Larry Antoniazzi - September 05, 2017 at 12:50 PM