



Eric P. Melbardis

February 1, 1953 - January 30, 2026

On Friday, January 30, 2026, Eric P. Melbardis passed away suddenly at his home in Santa Barbara, California, leaving behind his beloved wife Andrée Lorrain.

Eric was born in England in 1953, of parents who immigrated from Latvia and moved the family to Vancouver, British Columbia five years later. He attended the University of Saint Michael's College in Toronto and soon thereafter moved to Montréal where he began working in the computer industry.

While in Montréal, Eric met Andrée, the love of his life, who was pursuing her bachelor's degree at McGill University. It was also there that he met his lifelong friends and career collaborators, Sam and Otto, which culminated in the founding with Sam of the very successful technology company Netkit Solutions, LLC on March 15, 2000, operating in the Thousand Oaks area.

Eric was known for his brilliance, humility, kindness, and quick wit. From an early age his exceptional intellect was clear; he skipped first grade and was a straight-A student throughout his life. When asked—more than once—whether he belonged to Mensa International, he would simply look on with a straight face and never answer, preferring understatement to accolades.

Eric quietly and generously supported his community. One of his great

passions was woodworking. At one point he donated all his woodworking equipment and materials to a local high school shop teacher in Thousand Oaks, California. He later purchased a property in Goleta to continue his craft. There he welcomed local community members to create their own pieces, freely sharing his time and expertise. He also invited artisans from across California to use the shop he proudly considered his pride and joy.

Eric and Andrée shared a love of travel and the arts, attending opera, music, and theater performances throughout Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Seattle. They regularly supported these organizations through generous donations and quietly helped two nephews through their college years.

Family was central to Eric's life. He opened his home warmly to Andrée's family who benefited greatly from his hobby of discovering fine wines from around the world and his cooking skills worthy of a Michelin star. He formed a special bond with his father-in-law Pierre, often over long afternoons of barbecuing and smoking meats. He leaned on and adored his mother-in-law Stella, whom he loved like a mother. Stella sewed curtains for his Santa Barbara home and his woodworking shop, and the two were famously "two peas in a pod." Each night, Stella would tell him that if she didn't see him in the morning, she'd see him in heaven; "I'll be at the gate waiting for you," she'd say and that she'd tell Saint Peter, "He's a good guy—let him in!" Eric laughed every time. Now we imagine him holding the gate open for her.

A colossal limb has fallen from the family tree, but Eric's spirit remains. Remember the best times, the laughter, the music, and the full life he lived while he was strong. There is never a good time to say goodbye, and we did not want it to be now.

Left to honor his legacy with his wife Andée, are his mother-in-law Stella Lorrain of South Glens Falls, NY; brother-in-law Pierre Lorrain (Teri) of

Sedgwick, ME; sisters-in-law Danielle Mazza (Joe) of Queensbury, NY, Renée Lorrain of Saint Paul, MN, and France Lorrain; nephews Pierrot Lorrain (Lisa) of Groton, MA, and Adam Mazza of Saint Paul, MN; nieces Simone Lorrain (Justin) of Salem, MA, and Claudia Mazza (Sean Boardman) of Maplewood, MN; grandnephews Grayson Roberson of Maplewood, MN, and Emmett Lorrain of Salem, MA; and grandniece Penelope Lorrain of Groton, MA.

He is also lovingly remembered by his “adopted brother and sister,” Sam and Monique, and by the many friends who were family in every way that mattered, including Manuel, Manuel Jr, Carlos, Reina, Alphonso, Daniel, Arturo, and Cynthia. Thank you for the care, loyalty and friendship you all showed Eric over the years. He valued you greatly, spoke of you with real affection, and considered you family. We are so thankful for the way you supported him and for the love you gave him.

Always remembered, never forgotten: Rest in Peace, Eric. We will see you on the other side.

A chapel service will be held on Saturday, May 16, at 11:00 a.m. at the Welch-Ryce-Haider Funeral Chapel, 450 Ward Drive, Santa Barbara. Donations in lieu of flowers are welcomed to the following charities.

 The Nature Conservancy  www.conserve.nature.org

Fr. Virgil Cordano Center
4020 Suite 2 Calle Real

Upcoming Events

Chapel Service

MAY **16**. 11:00 AM (PT)

Welch-Ryce-Haider Funeral Chapels and Crematorium

450 Ward Dr.

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