



Richard Atamian

November 8, 1921 - June 11, 2024

Richard Atamian passed away on June 11, 2024, at the remarkable age of 102. He was born in Detroit, Michigan, on November 8, 1921, and was the 25,000th child born in the city.

Richard developed a passion for photography during high school, which continued through his years at Wayne State University. He began his professional career with General Motors as a photographer, though it was briefly interrupted when he enlisted in the Navy during World War II and became a Naval Aviator.

After the war, Richard met Helen Lawson on a blind date, and they married eight months later. Their marriage endured for 70 years until Helen's passing in 2016. Together, they traveled the US before settling in Michigan, where Richard pursued a career as an Illustrative Photographer in Saginaw. He later became the head of Bradford LaRiviere, overseeing a team of 40 writers, artists, and photographers.

For 30 years, Richard and Helen made their home in Frankenmuth, Michigan, where they raised their family. In 1977, Richard moved the family to Santa Barbara, CA, to teach at the Brooks Institute of Photography, where he chaired the Illustration Department. He also contributed significantly to the Winona School of Professional Photography as a teacher and trustee. Richard

was an active member of the Professional Photographers of America and Camera Craftsmen of America, lecturing across the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. His accomplishments also include an Honorary Master of Science Degree, Master of Photography, Photographic Craftsman degree and he was a Fellow in the Institute of Incorporated Photographers of Great Britain.

After retiring in 1987, Richard pursued a fourth career in fine art black and white photography. When he was not taking photos, Richard enjoyed playing golf, traveling the world, and making frequent cross-country trips to visit family in Michigan.

Richard is survived by his daughters Lorie Atamian, Erin (Jeff) Zuck, and Jill (Mark) Hall, as well as grandchildren Ian (Bre) Hall, Olivia Zuck, and Audrey Zuck.

A service to celebrate Richard's life will be held at the Santa Barbara Cemetery on July 26th at 2:00pm. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara.

Cemetery Details

Santa Barbara Cemetery

901 Channel Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93108
(805) 969-3231

Previous Events

Graveside Service

JUL 26. 2:00 PM (PT)

Santa Barbara Cemetery
901 Channel Drive
Santa Barbara, CA 93108