

ROBERT BOWERS OBITUARY

Bob Bowers passed away after a long bout with COPD on 13 September 2019. His survivors include brother Edgar Bowers of Ellicott City MD, sister Joan Bowers of Islip NY and brother Kenneth Bowers of Islip NY. He was predeceased by his wife Ellie Bowers (nee Hedges). There will be no funeral.

Bob was born on 6 June 1938 in Brooklyn NY. His family moved to Long Island in 1943. He graduated from Islip High School in 1956 as class salutatorian and regular left fielder on the baseball team as a senior. He was awarded a full scholarship to Syracuse University. However things didn't go well and he left after one year. Bob joined the Army and spent one year learning Russian, then was assigned to West Germany for two years of keeping tabs on Russian activities. Upon discharge there was another try at Syracuse which again didn't last long.

Bob returned to Islip and got a job as a helper at Mackenzie Chemical, a small local chemical plant. He also began playing serious bridge and married the bridge director but this union didn't last. At Mackenzie Bob quickly rose to manager(!) of company operations. However the neighbors didn't like this plant and EPA threats caused Mackenzie to build a new plant in rural Bush, Louisiana.

Bob and Mackenzie's son-in-law were assigned to co-manage the new plant in Louisiana but this arrangement didn't work. So Bob and Ellie moved to Albany Georgia then to Atlanta where they got married in a small ceremony attended by Grant Baze. In Atlanta Bob worked with a 'headhunter' looking for actuaries, but recruiting was slowing down. At this point Mackenzie called and said the plant in Louisiana was not doing well and his daughter had divorced the previous manager. Did Bob want the job back? The timing was perfect. Bob and Ellie bought a lovely house in Bush and Bob soon resurrected the chemical company.

Bob and Ellie were gamers – they routinely played backgammon at 6 AM before breakfast. And they frequently crossed Lake Ponchartrain to play at the bridge club in Metairie. In a national tournament in Washington DC they played in the prestigious Lifemaster Pairs and finished 6th out of 200 of the best pairs in the country. They both liked nice things and dressing up to go to fancy

restaurants. But they both smoked and health issues resulted. Ellie had circulatory problems and passed in 2012. After Ellie died, Bob moved to Metairie and became a frequent player at the bridge club. Bob almost never had a bad game. His favorite partners included John Onstott, Chuck Pitard, Paul Deal and Jamie Bush. But he consistently scored high no matter who his partner was. One battle Bob didn't win was smoking. He tried to quit many times but always went back to it and his lung situation got worse.

Bob was my brother and my telephone buddy. I would see his bridge hands and scores on the internet and critique them. Of course, the topics I selected were always on his infrequent bad hands. "What happened on that one?" And I also brought up problems I had at our local club in Maryland. Often Bob provided the answer I didn't want to hear. But it was fun. I'll miss him very much.

Edgar Bowers