



## Robert Cunningham Doherty

September 30, 1930 - November 28, 2019

Robert (Bob) Cunningham Doherty was born in New York City, New York on September 30, 1930, the son of Francis Joseph and Helen Utley Doherty. He grew up in Westchester County, NY and attended public schools there (first in Mount Vernon and then “out in the country” in Chappaqua). He was a Cub Scout for several years, took piano lessons and frequently played sandlot baseball with his older brother, Mike.

At the start of WWII, his parents decided to move back to New York City and in 1939 Bob and his brother were sent to a boarding academy, The Harvey School, in Hawthorne, NY.

Bob prepped at Exeter in New Hampshire and four years later went to Princeton University, where he majored in English, minored in American Civilization, belonged to the Ivy Club and played on the 1951 National Championship lacrosse team. He graduated in 1952.

The Korean War was underway at the time. After Officers Training, Bob was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. Following brief stops in Quantico, Virginia; Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; Camp Pendleton, California; and three months on an artillery range at the foot of Mt. Fuji, Japan, he was shipped to Korea as a replacement forward observer with the 11th Marines. He eventually became the Executive Officer of a 105-mm battery in that regiment.

Discharged in 1954, he returned home to New York City where his advertising and marketing career began. He joined the New York office of a large Chicago ad agency. After five years, Bob and three of his associates left the firm to form their own start-up which, in turn, they sold several years later to Wells Rich Greene, a prominent Madison Avenue firm whose clients included Procter & Gamble, Ralston Purina, PanAm, IBM and which was responsible for the “I Love NY” campaign.

In 1979, at the urging of a New York recruiter, Bob met Charles McKinney who owned a small but successful agency (McKinney, Silver & Rockett) in Raleigh which was beginning

to attract attention from national advertisers. Bob was interested and moved his family and worldly possessions to North Carolina (and escaped the intensity and decay of NYC).

Over time, the agency flourished with clients like Piedmont Airlines (which grew quickly in the 1980's after the airline industry was deregulated), North Carolina National Bank (which eventually became Bank of America), Royal Caribbean and Norwegian Cruise Lines and Audi Automobiles.

Eventually, as the advertising agency industry became increasingly consolidated, independence became more difficult so Bob (as CEO) and Lloyd Jacobs, his partner, together with several senior executives, sold the company to a group of digital marketing pioneers in Silicon Valley, California.

Bob retired a year later, in 2000, and turned his attention to a number of the state's well-known cultural institutions: The North Carolina Symphony, The National Audubon Society and The North Carolina Museum of History. He joined their boards and began counseling them on a pro-bono basis. He found the work very rewarding and enjoyed the challenges and the passion of the people who dedicated themselves to these worthy organizations.

Together with his beloved wife, Kerstin, he enjoyed almost twenty years of retirement. He gardened, spent weekends at their home on Figure Eight Island, visited with his four sons, Michael, Kelly, Andy, Tom and their far-flung family members (which now include eight grandchildren) and twice a year, for many years took fly-fishing trips out west with one or more of his sons to Montana, Colorado or Wyoming. There were even adventures to exotic locations like Patagonia, the Alaskan Aleutian Islands, Belize and the salt-water flats of The Bahamas.

Of these trips, Bob had this to say in the foreword of a book of his fishing notes that was privately printed in 2010:

"The thing about fly-fishing is this...

First, it's the beauty of the places it takes you. Then it's the joy of time with loved ones.

It's the banter of streamside pals.

It's the little stories, never forgotten.

It's trying to master technique.

Then – and only then – is it about the fish.

So it is with life," he would add.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to the The NC Symphony or the NC Audubon Society.



# Comments

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“ To Bob’s family.... what a wonderful person Bob was.... he was a mentor to me and to so many others. While we saw each other infrequently in the last 20 years we still talked by phone and card. He was always “the same old Bob”. He was revered at Piedmont Airlines and all looked to Bob as a rock of wisdom and vision about how to present who we were as an airline. Simply put... he was a big part of the Piedmont family. Piedmont’s market presence would not have been the same without Bob. He knew how to tell our story to our customers. And he knew how to guide his team at the agency in creating the Piedmont message. It was my pleasure to work with him as the senior marketing executive at Piedmont. He made me look good but it was all his handiwork. What a great guy.... I always enjoyed visiting with Bob as he was so interesting.... but he was also a great listener. My condolences to his family but also deep admiration for a very, very special person.

Dan Brock

Winston-Salem, NC

Dan Brock - December 08 at 03:41 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Robert Cunningham Doherty.



December 04 at 01:37 PM

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“ I was hired as a caregiver for the late Mrs. Doherty. The position was only going to be temporary for me,however, it became so much more. Mr.D as we fondly called him,always said, I was head caregiver, but, we both knew that title was all his. I truly admired his loving, attentiveness to Kerstin. Such devotion I cared for Kerstin a little over 5 years, then had the privilege to stay on and care for Mr.D what a honor. Mr.D was a very kind,generous soul. If you met him you instantly liked him. I loved the way he lived his retirement years. Every day up at precisely 9am breakfast with the sports section, up for a shower, then off to Harris teeter with his list which he often forgot. I have so many memories. I loved to pick his brain and get his opinion on many things, from what was going on in the world to what was going on in my own life. Fly high Mr.D you without a doubt have earned your wings! We will all miss you and I for one am a better person for knowing you.

Denise Goff - December 03 at 07:28 PM