



Gordon Elliott Parsons

May 25, 2016

Gordon Elliott Parsons of Gainesville, Florida, died on May 25, 2016 at the age of 100, after five miraculous years surviving the effects of a stroke.

He was born in Toronto Canada, the youngest of five boys. When he was eight, his family moved to California, where he came to love the natural beauty of the California coast and spent many happy hours body surfing and fishing for abalone. As a young man his curiosity led him to explore many jobs, including working as a movie extra on Mutiny on the Bounty.

Gordon always wanted to be a teacher, and graduated from the University of California Santa Barbara with a BA in education.

He served in the US army during World War II as a combat engineer during the invasion of Normandy Beach on D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge.

Upon returning to civilian life, Gordon pursued his passion for teaching, working as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal in Los Angeles and Palo Alto. He obtained his masters degree in education from Stanford University and doctorate from the University of Arizona. He was headmaster of the American International schools in Switzerland and Austria, after which he worked for the US State Department as regional education officer, and then as director of the American Association of International Schools, where he was loved by many fellow educators for his kind, thoughtful mentorship.

In retirement, he spent many happy summers at his home in Nova Scotia, watching the rhythms of the ocean, the fishermen, and the rich plant and animal life around him. An active, engaged convert to the Catholic Church, he brought this same sense of wonder to his religious life, and spent many hours in service to others.

We remember him for his vitality—his deep love of nature, his thoughtful attention to others, his mischievous sense of humor, the profound love he showed his wife Patricia.

He is predeceased by his four brothers, his parents, and by his first wife Nelly Schultz, with whom he had two children, Christy and Peter. He is survived by his wife Patricia Parsons, his stepson Michael Polignano, and by his many friends throughout the world.

A memorial vigil celebrating Gordon's life will be held at Holy Faith Catholic Church, 747 NW 43rd Street, Gainesville, on Tuesday, May 31 8-9:30 pm, followed by a funeral mass on Wednesday, June 1 at 9:30 am. Arrangements are in the care of Forest Meadows Funeral Home (352)378-2528.

Tribute Wall

RD

“ May I offer my condolences to Gordon’s family. I first met Gordon in New Delhi, India when serving at the American International School. Over the course of several years I would meet him at conferences and share our interest in these schools. Gordon was a respected leader in the field.

Richard Downie - September 12, 2023 at 12:55 PM