



In Loving Memory of Peter Griscom Heylin

Peter G. Heylin, 71, passed away on April 27th, 2015 in his home in Brookdale, CA. He was an innovative businessman known for his creativity and boundless energy as well as his desire to make positive change in the world. He put providing and caring for his family first but also charmed many people with his dry sense of humor, his friendliness and enthusiasm. Most would agree that Peter was highly talented at everything he did.

Peter was born on January 25th, 1944, the son of the late Gordon and Grayce Heylin. He was a polio survivor and met huge challenges throughout his life due to the weakness that the disease had caused. He broke his legs nine times and was told four times that he would never walk again. With sheer willpower and resilience he never gave up and overcame the odds. He always used to say, "When things get tough, the tough get going."

Peter held an MBA from the University of Chicago Business School and a BA from Cornell University. Environmentally avant-garde, he believed in ecology and the need to recycle, reuse and preserve natural resources. In 1975, he founded Encore!, a sustainable bottle washing company. He was head of the board of directors at the Berkeley Ecology Center, developed the first curbside program to pickup and recycle newspapers and introduced glassphalt to pave roads. He placed environmental values foremost in his business dealings; even when it meant less profits for his company.

Peter was a dedicated and loving husband to his soul mate and best friend of 38 years, Linda. He placed the highest value on his family and provided for them generously.

He enjoyed a variety of passions in life, including finances, wine, building his own home, model O scale railroads, repairing any and everything, traveling around in his vintage airstream motorhome, antiques, vintage automobiles and spending quality time with his family and friends. He was an eloquent and succinct writer who could argue his point brilliantly as well as an accomplished chicken farmer.

Peter loved California from the moment he arrived. His brother Brock said that he turned native at once, preferring the stunning nature, the easy-going ways and the liberalism of California to that of his home state, Pennsylvania.

After his retirement in 2001, Peter continued to be an active community member starting with the construction of the East Bay Oakland Strokes boathouse. It was a ten year project that would not have been possible without his continued dedication and consultation. He served on the Santa Cruz Commission of Disabilities for five years and was instrumental in making many businesses and shops handicap compliant.

In addition to his wife, Linda, Peter is survived by his brother Brockwel and sister Marcia; his children John, Maya, Tera and Jodi; his grandchildren Daphne and Harlan; his niece Leigh; his daughter-in-law Molly; his son-in-law Blake and many treasured friends.

In May of 2014, Peter was diagnosed with stage IIIB Lung Cancer. He fought the disease courageously under the care of the lovely and committed Dr. Julie Jaffe of Dignity Health in Santa Cruz. In January of 2015, his cancer metastasized to his brain. When he understood that the fight was over, he and Linda made the difficult decision to continue with palliative care under the supervision of Hospice Santa Cruz. They remained impressed and incredibly grateful for the exceptional end of life care that he received. Throughout his sickness, Peter never lost his sense of humor. When his brain cancer finally took the use of his legs, he said "Boy, I hope these six months go by fast!". When asked about the afterlife, he chuckled and said "when I'm dead, I'm dust."

Peter was remarkable in the way he faced having polio as a youngster and endured the long-term difficulties it caused. He faced his terminal cancer and death with equal courage. He said he had had a wonderful life and that he had no regrets. If we can learn from the people who have lived and died before us, then their life truly has meaning and we are grateful for their existence.

Peter will be remembered for bringing us ingenious ways of thinking, in both business and in environmental sustainability. He did not want a memorial service but a party to celebrate his life and life in general.