



Richard Korff

September 11, 2022

On September 11, 2022 Rick Korff has flown West, passing away from cancer.

He is survived by his wife Cindy, son Michael (Crystal), daughter Donna (Pete) and granddaughters Katie Mae (Michael), Zoe and Emma (Donna), sisters Linda (Gary), Barb (Russ) and preceded in death by his sister Beverly and his parents.

A husband, father, brother, friend, pilot, engineer and creator of mechanical and thermal dynamic parts, Rick spent the last 30 years with his sweetheart, companion and wife Cindy. Together they enjoyed traveling the United States and Europe, visiting World War II battle sites, the Vienna opera house, the Vatican to see the Pope and much more. Rick was extremely thorough with the travel itineraries a majority of the time but he and Cindy were also known to book a flight and car and see where the day brought them – even if that meant navigating the streets of Paris at rush hour.

Rick was born in Lockport, New York, the son of Ralph and Geraldine Korff. He grew up in Lockport and after graduating from high school, attended Parks College of St. Louis University where he completed his Bachelor of Science of Aerospace Engineering degree in only three years. After graduation he returned to Lockport where he worked at the family business, Korff Electric with his father and uncles for a brief time. He left the family business when he

was hired by Harrison Radiator in Lockport and became a project engineer in the Aviation and Military Contracts Division. His expertise with thermal dynamics and engineering became so apparent that if he was not in the office, decisions would be postponed until he returned to work the next day.

Rick and two partners discovered a unique business opportunity and left Harrison Radiator to form their own company, Niagara Development and Manufacturing, located in Niagara Falls, New York. The company's humble start began in a small two-story stone house in 1981. The opportunity proved to be a success as NDM was awarded a contract from General Dynamics to supply the cooler for the M1 Abrams main battle tank. Based on his original designs for the newer M1 tank, Rick also designed a replacement cooler for the M-60 tank that could be installed in the field. He also found success in the civilian market after creating an auxiliary transmission oil cooler used on the Ford Taurus SHO. His designs found their way into countless other coolers for other applications such as the Sikorsky Helicopters, Caterpillar, and even Mercury outboard marine engines.

Around 1994 Rick left NDM and briefly retired to Florida. Five years later he re-entered the thermal dynamics industry and started AERO-Classics, Inc. in Ohio. After selling the business, he moved back to Florida. His creativity and love of mechanical design was rekindled when he started to work for Seal Dynamics specializing in the reverse engineering of FAA approved alternative parts and components. Rick re-created everything from high-pressure pneumatic valves and clamps to seat cushions and tray table latches for various commercial aircraft ranging from the Embraer 145 to the Boeing 767.

Rick's work was never doubted at Seal Dynamics and thanks to his incredible wealth of knowledge, he was personally responsible for the issuance of hundreds of FAA Parts Manufacturer Approval (PMA) and Supplemental Type Certificates (STC) required to meet the demanding safety specifications

required by the government for the aviation industry. After stepping back from full-time employment, Rick became a part-time independent contractor working from home for Seal Dynamics.

Rick's love of aviation extended beyond his professional involvement and he is probably most remembered for his classic World War II aircraft collection. Taught by his father Ralph in his Piper J3 Cub, Rick's flight training began at an early age, culminating with his first solo flight on his 16th birthday. In 1984 Rick bought his first aircraft, a Harvard MK4, the Canadian version of the North American T-6 Texan. After a complete restoration over a winter, he flew this plane for two years before traveling to Alberta Canada to purchase a P-51 Mustang. The restored warbird would be known as Six-Shooter following Rick's restoration of the classic aircraft.

Rick was a board member of the National Warplane Museum of Geneseo, NY and spent every weekend during the spring and summer traveling the East Coast of the United States and Canada displaying this classic aircraft in air shows for all to enjoy. His love for aircraft built by North American aviation was noticeable as he added a B-25 Mitchell to his collection to join in the airshow circuit a few years later. Rick's airshow career expanded with a French CM-170 Fouga Magister and flew as part of a two-jet aerobatic team for a few seasons.

Rick was a highly-skilled aviator. He was an FAA-certified Commercial Instrument pilot with a type rating in the B-25 and received several FAA low-altitude and high-performance waivers required for his airshow performances. He was also an FAA-certified Airframe and Powerplant mechanic allowing him to maintain and restore his personal Air Force.

A humble man when referring to himself, he was extremely proud of his

children and their accomplishments and did not hesitate to brag about them when asked.

To keep his memory alive, if you have any great stories about Rick, please share them below or email them to bumble900@hotmail.com.

There will be no public funeral or viewing scheduled. A future private family memorial will be scheduled at a later date.

Tribute Wall

MI

“ *A great photo of Dad back in the airshow days.*



Mike - September 23, 2022 at 01:30 PM

GH

“ *So very sorry to hear of Rick's passing, regrets we didn't have the chance to talk about old times and adventures past. I will think of him often as always and remember the best of times gone by. Fair winds and a smooth flight west my friend and thank you for so many great memories.*



Gary Holt - September 13, 2022 at 07:56 PM



“ *2 files added to the album Memories Album*



Toale Brothers Funeral Home & Crematory - September 13, 2022 at 02:52 PM