

FRANK GOFF JENNE



Beloved husband of Geraldine (Rapp) Jenne of 56 years. Loving father of Chip Jenne (Kathryn); cherished grandfather of Claire Elyse Jenne and Jamie Harrison Jenne. Frank died the evening of February 29, 2024. He was one of five sons and one daughter to the late William K. Jenne and Robina Kirk Quinby Jenne, and one half-brother from his mother's earlier marriage.

Frank was a dedicated and proud electrical engineer, obtaining his Professional Engineer license in three states. He was also of solid engineering stock. His great-grandfather was W.K. Jenne, holder of many patents and developer of the first commercial typewriter for the Remington Company of Ilion, New York. One of the features he patented was the first appearance of a "return" feature, that would later come to be known as the Enter button on all our computers. On his mother's side, Frank's great-grandfather was Arthur Kirk of Edinburgh, Scotland. Kirk immigrated to Pittsburgh and held patents in dynamite and dams and was called the "Prince of Dynamite" for his contribution to clearing debris after the Johnstown Flood, and the "Father of Good Roads" for his contribution to early automobile culture and safety. Kirk received an obituary in the first American automobile magazine. Arthur Kirk was also known for his civic duty, "On Decoration Days (Kirk's) wagons were at the disposal of disabled veterans who were unable to march in the line to the cemeteries." Kirk later purchased the Crescent Cement Company in Wampum, PA. Crescent supplied the cement used to build the Brooklyn Bridge, but after many years of company and family prosperity, tragedies and the Great Depression proved a turning point in family fortunes.

Frank was born in Pikeville, KY on March 16, 1939. After moving to Edgeworth, PA, at the age of nine, Frank met his future wife, Geraldine, "Geri", while playing on a set of swings across the street from Edgeworth Elementary School. Their families also attended Shield's Presbyterian Church, where Frank and Geri would marry in 1967. Frank's family moved to Maryland in 10th grade. Frank then graduated from Milford Mill High School in Reisterstown, MD, where he wrestled varsity. Frank's father died suddenly of a heart attack in Frank's senior year of high school. He wanted to contribute to his mother and younger siblings' care, so he stayed close to home and worked and attended Catonsville Community College, until he applied to join the Air Force to fly fighters, as his father did as a decorated pilot in World War I. Frank's vision was better than 20/20, his mind was sharp and his reflexes quick, but he was found to have tone deafness that disqualified him from military flight eligibility. Frank decided instead to serve honorably in the Air National Guard in Maryland as an electronics technician, after which he worked on navigational systems for Boeing Corporation in Seattle, returning to Pittsburgh, where he graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1972. Frank began work in the private sector as an electrical engineer until 1984 when he joined the Army Corp of Engineers, where he worked for 20 years, managing power design for the many locks and dams around Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio, and West Virginia, while also serving where needed when war or natural disasters called, regardless of risk to life and limb. He was in Kuwait twice, Bosnia and for flooding and hurricane relief he was in Florida, South Dakota, and Ohio. He was honored with the NATO medal for service in Bosnia and received several commendations from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for his contributions around the United States.

Frank's life was dedicated to improving the material conditions of his family and the quality of his work. Once while testing equipment in the office for use at a job site, he discovered a voltage problem present in his office building. He tested the voltage in other government-owned buildings and wrote a report, detailing potential savings of hundreds of millions of dollars annually for which he received a financial award, a commendation, and a meeting with the Secretary of Energy's office in Washington, DC.

Frank was known for his quick wit and sense of humor. He loved his cat, Spot, for all of Spot's 21 years. He loved hiking, joking, and laughing with his son, Chip, for which his son is eternally grateful.

Frank was an adventurer at heart. As a young man, he built his own cabin in the Pacific Northwest, in Bellingham, WA, and then built his own kayak to navigate the San Juan Islands, until he married Geri and they moved into Seattle as newlyweds.

Upon returning to Pittsburgh and completing his education at Pitt, Frank and Geri bought a house in Edgeworth, PA on Woodland Road and had their son, Chip. Due to Frank's work, the family moved frequently, including stints in the Texas Panhandle, Northern Quebec, and Colorado, where Frank worked on early oil shale projects for major mining concerns on the Western Slope of the Rockies. Frank took up running in the 1970s and ran the famous Bolder Boulder 10K race each year the family lived in Colorado. When the oil shale industry changed, Frank moved his family back to Pittsburgh and from there made it his home base for the remainder of his career and retirement. His long and lauded career spanned 5 decades and took him around the world in pursuit of electrical design solutions in the public and private sector. Western Pennsylvania was home, but the world was his job site.

Frank was keenly aware of and proud of the history of his family in America. He also loved stamp and coin collecting, and as a true Scotsman, he was a tinkerer, spending time each week in his workshop on inventions, creating prototypes as varied as coin displays and hand-powered bicycles that his son tested out over the years. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather, and will continue to be deeply loved and missed. He was a man of great kindness of heart.

A memorial for Frank will be held this spring in Edgeworth. In lieu of flowers, and in honor of a family tradition of commitment to our veterans, donations can be made through the VA portal found at https://www.cdceportal.va.gov/donate_online/ and selecting the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. Arrangements are entrusted to **RICHARD D. COLE FUNERAL HOME, LTD.**, 328 Beaver St., Sewickley, PA 15143. To leave a memory of Frank, visit our website: www.richarddcolefhome.com

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