



Chester W. Ambler III, a lifelong resident of Southern New Jersey, passed away Sunday Nov. 4, 2007 at Thomas Jefferson Memorial Hospital in Philadelphia surrounded by his wife Aldonna Rickmers Ambler and his siblings Carol and Tommy Masaracchia, Chris and Paul Riley and Manira and David Bassett. He had valiantly battled multiple myeloma (bone marrow cancer) for more than six and a half years surprising and impressing his doctors with his undefeatable attitude and indomitable will to live. He was 60.

Born June 22, 1947 in Philadelphia, PA, Mr. Ambler, best known as "Chet" or "Skip", lived the first five years of his life in Swedesboro, NJ. He grew up in the Laurel Hills section of Woodstown, NJ and graduated from Woodstown High School in 1964 in the top 1 percent of his class. He earned two bachelor's degrees -- Liberal Arts and Architecture -- and received a master's degree in Architecture from Syracuse University in 1971.

Mr. Ambler had the unique gift of being visionary and pragmatic in both his public and private life. He was a true public servant who embodied the roles of guardian of the public trust, protector of the natural environment, and staunch advocate for mass transportation. Over the past 30 years Mr. Ambler rose through the ranks of South Jersey governmental entities as Program Manager for the Mercer County Planning Department, Planning Director of Salem County Planning Board and Coordinator of the Atlantic City Urban Area Transportation Council.

Before disability retirement in November 2001, he was Manager of Programs for the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) and was responsible for \$200 million in annual capital programs and the oversight of the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPS). He played a key role in helping South Jersey to comply with complex federal and state air and water quality standards. Due to his reputation for fairness and excellent technical skills he was selected to be a judge entrusted with evaluating Transportation Enhancement grant proposals that resulted in bike paths, park improvements, nature and wildlife preserves and preservation of lighthouses. Mr. Ambler was also instrumental in the successful effort to revive train service between Atlantic City and Philadelphia, the completion of Route 55, and the project to save the dunes in Long Port, NJ.

He was renowned for his integrity, wit, wisdom and compassion. His greatest life's pleasure was being married to Aldonna for 36 years. He loved the Jersey shore and joyously shared his lifelong passion for boating and body surfing with family and friends. He also loved devouring the daily newspapers, playing bridge with his college friends, teaching canasta to his godchildren, sharing his childhood haunts with his sisters, vacationing with his nieces and nephews, wearing Hawaiian shirts, listening to blues and reggae, and watching the trees and birds from his back deck. He was a member of the Society of Friends and Acacia Fraternity. He cared deeply about the world and contributed regularly to many causes including The Nature Conservatory, the Sierra Club, Public Citizen, Planned Parenthood, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Family

Predeceased by:

- Mother: H. Elaine (Dilks) Ambler Harvey
- Father: Chester William Ambler Jr.
- Stepfather: Bruce F. Harvey
- Maternal Grandfather Charles Dilks, step grandmother Edna Shoemaker Dilks
- Paternal Grandfather Chester William Ambler Sr. & Grandmother Eva Hewitt Ambler

Survived by:

- Aldonna Rickmers Ambler, spouse
- Stepmother Carolyn Klein Ambler
- Sisters: Christine and Paul Riley of Fort Wayne, ID and Carol and Tommy Masaracchia of Hammond, LA;
- Step siblings: Patty and Sam Schagrin of Houston, TX; Kathy and Don Meiers of Louisville, KY; Susan and Dirk Van Bree of Hammond, LA; Blair Harvey of Louisville, KY
- In-law siblings Kate Christopher of Grand Blanc, MI, Al Rickmers of Milford, MI, and Marti Rodwell of Canton, MI
- Adopted sister Manira Wilson-Bassett and David Bassett of Tolland, CT
- Three godchildren, Aaron, Manira Skye, and Lauren Bassett
- 20 nieces and nephews: Stephanie (Meyers) Szymanowski and David Meyers, Misty and Brynn Riley; Emily Masaracchia; Vanessa, Allison and Gillian Van Bree; Lee and Kristi Meiers; Katy Harvey; Carla (Julie) Christopher; Debbie (Boreing) Powell, Danielle (Boreing) Chatterton, Stephen Boreing, and Mason Graham Rickmers; Stephan, Devin, Erika, and Sheila Rodwell
- 10 grand nieces and nephews

A Celebration of Life was held at The Coastline Restaurant in Cherry Hill, NJ on November 7, 2007. The funeral arrangements were handled by Layton & Sons Home for Funerals in Woodstown, NJ. A private interment will be held at Lawnside Cemetery at the family's convenience.

For those who wish to express sympathy in lieu of flowers, Aldonna respectfully suggests donations to the following organizations:

The Nature Conservancy www.nature.org

The Leukemia/Lymphoma/Myeloma Society www.leukemia.org

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital Kimmel Cancer Center www.kimmelcancercenter.org

Please indicate your donation is in memoriam of Chester W. Ambler, III.