



## Andrew "Andy" Hutcheon Merritt

July 17, 1939 - November 2, 2019

Andy Merritt, age 80, died peacefully Saturday, November 2, 2019 at E. T. York Haven Hospice Center several days after a fall. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Eleanor; son Kurt Merritt (Jan), daughter Karen Merritt (Elliot), son Glen Merritt (Monica) and three grandchildren, Sarah Merritt, Nathan Merritt, and Artimus Merritt.

He was born July 17, 1939 in Brockton, Massachusetts and grew up in nearby Rockland MA. He was a member of the Rockland Unitarian Church and was an active participant during his high school years.

Andy graduated from Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana with a major in Geology in 1962 and that was where he and Eleanor met. They married after graduation and started Graduate School at the University of Illinois that Fall. He became interested in Civil Engineering when taking classes from a professor (Don U. Deere) who taught in both departments and ended up receiving a PhD in 1968 with a major in Geology and a minor in Civil Engineering.

A lifetime of adventure started with being hired by a Canadian engineering company to provide construction supervision during the construction of a large hydroelectric project (Churchill Falls) in northern remote Labrador. They moved there with two children under two and a third was born in Labrador. After two years in the frozen north Andy and family moved to a construction camp (Alto Anchicayá) in the tropical jungle rain forest in the northern Andes Mountains in western Colombia. Two more years passed working on this hydroelectric project with the added benefit of Andy becoming fluent in Spanish.

Soon after returning to civilization, Dr. Deere, who had moved to Gainesville FL, asked Andy to join him in a 2-man international consulting firm in Geology and Rock Mechanics and Andy said Yes. He and his family moved to Gainesville in 1973 and for the next 35 years dams and tunnels became his life. In 1981 he founded Andrew H. Merritt Inc. and continued to work for The World Bank, The Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and numerous international contractors.

Andy worked in 43 countries from Nepal to Malawi to Indonesia to Turkey to Lesotho to Colombia on hydroelectric projects and he did lament in later years that he had never gotten to Iceland. He suffered a major stroke in 2008 which ended his adventurous travels.

If one wishes to honor Andy's life with a donation, please donate to the American Friends Service Committee or to a charity of your choice.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 2:00 pm on Saturday, November 23, 2019 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at 4225 NW 34th Street. All who have known Andy or have known of Andy are welcome and please feel free to speak of your memories.



# Comments

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“ Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Andrew "Andy" Hutcheon Merritt.



November 21, 2019 at 08:54 PM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Andrew "Andy" Hutcheon Merritt.



November 19, 2019 at 04:17 PM

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“ I met Andy over 20 years ago in Colombia. I have to say meeting Andy has been one of the most precious gifts in life. Thanks to him (and Eleanor) I managed to start my graduate studies in Gainesville. Soon after arriving he helped me move furniture, look for a rental apartment and get installed. Through the years Andy, Eleanor and family were always there, an extension of family away from my home country. Always a helping hand, a smile, a smart advise or a clever joke I knew he was there. His vast and varied knowledge, experienced traveler, made him a perfect conversation partner. It was always a pleasure to speak with him. From Gator basketball to hydropower projects in Colombia, I always learned. A world of admiration to such an exemplary great human being, husband, father, grandfather, friend, profesional. GRACIAS Andy, larga vida!, tu presencia perdura!! (Andres, Renata, Mateo, Isabela)

**Andres Amaya** - November 18, 2019 at 10:56 PM

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“ I was fortunate to know Andy through my friendship with his son, Glen (Hutch). Because of Andy and Eleanor's generosity I was invited to ride from central Texas to Glendale, Arizona for the 2006 Florida vs Ohio State national championship football game. During the trip we shared many laughs and I was able to be a party to Glen and Andy's banter and roughhousing. It was a special relationship they shared and I was able to glean what terrific pieces of Andy had stuck to Hutch and helped make

him the man he is. A walloping sense of humor, super fandom for the Gators, gusto for life, and a welcoming spirit that automatically made me feel like part of the family were foremost of these. The Gators beat those buckeyes and we had a whale of a time. I also had the privilege of visiting the Merritt home in Gainesville several times and benefiting from Andy and Eleanor's great hospitality. Visiting a few years later after Andy's stroke I was saddened by the way that event had robbed him of his mobility and some of his deeper wit. However, his sparkle, humor, and welcoming nature were still on full display and I was glad to have spent that time too. I know that he worked and fought valiantly all these years since the stroke, which had to have been exhausting for him. I am so pleased that he was able to see his grandkids grow and thrive and that they were able to delight in such a grandfather. My best to the Merritt clan during this difficult time. Shine on, Andy!

**Melinda Ring** - November 09, 2019 at 09:54 AM