



J Carter Perkins

January 6, 1926 - May 28, 2023

J. Carter Perkins, 97, died May 28, 2023, at the Big Bend Hospice House in Tallahassee, FL surrounded by family. He was born J. Carter Perkins, Jr. on January 6, 1926, in Rochester, NY to parents J. Carter Perkins, Sr. and Mildred Eckam Perkins. He grew up near the shores of Lake Ontario with a view of the lake from his bedroom and despite years of living in the southeast never lost his hometown accent, always referring to it as “Rosh-ter.”

Carter was the first in his family to earn a college degree, graduating in 1951 with a BS in Physics from the University of Rochester. He was already a husband and dad by then, marrying his beloved wife Jeanne Litteer on March 19, 1946. Although Jeanne was some months older than Carter, which he liked to remind her, she was the one who had to prove her age when they eloped.

With Jeanne at his side, he started college at the University of North Carolina but transferred back to the U of R where he received notice to report for military service. Perhaps because of his educational background, Carter was given authority to escort a group of men to the army induction center in Buffalo, NY. His service lasted only that single day, however, because his eyesight proved to be below army standards.

Carter juggled school and supporting a family, with son Mark born in 1949 and

daughter Marcy arriving in 1951 just in time for his graduation. Son Scott got off schedule and showed up 4 years later in 1955. By then, the family was in Palo Alto, California where Carter made a solid start to his career as a telecommunications engineer. He worked for various telecom companies, returning to the east coast and eventually settling in Atlanta, GA. He consulted across the U.S. and the world and had at least 7 patents to his name, including the Bell Labs Picturephone, which debuted at the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

The Picturephone was the first phone offering video capability. At the time everyone pooh-poohed it as unlikely to ever catch on because people would be too worried about what they looked like. It turned out to be a colossal failure, not for that reason, but because the service cost was more than anyone was willing to pay, at nearly \$200 (in today's equivalent) for a 3-minute call.

Carter always wanted to live on a farm and bought a 100-year-old farmhouse on 96 acres of land outside of Rochester, which his kids remember with great fondness. He was the family photographer and collector of antique cameras. He hunted, mostly gamebirds, and collected antique firearms. He loved flyfishing and learned to tie flies. With his brother-in-law, he "fished the loop," a multiday trip of canoeing and fly-fishing on the Moose River in Maine. Perhaps most of all, though, Carter loved dancing. When their kids were young, Jeanne and Carter square-danced. Their interest evolved to round dancing, and they became masters of the waltz. After Carter retired, they added duplicate bridge to their activities and began earning life master points through competitive bridge playing at tournaments. Always avid readers, Carter and Jeanne were also active in book clubs.

Sadly, Jeanne's eyesight began failing in her later years, restricting her activities, and she died at age 95. She always said she'd be the first to die,

and she made Carter promise he would carry on after she was gone. He was always the more social of the two, making friends easily, especially with women. He leaves a special friend, Ann Lance, who lived next door at his assisted living facility. He commented that she likes to play bridge and drink red wine. In other words, she was the perfect neighbor. Ann brought much joy to Carter in his last year and always brought a smile to his face.

In addition to his wife Jeanne, Carter is predeceased by his parents and only brother, Ronnie Perkins and wife Carol. He is survived by his children – sons Mark (Susanna) and Scott (Tamyra Hyatt), daughter Marcy (Robin Driscoll), and Japanese daughter Ako Itoh (Moto) – as well as eight grandchildren and their spouses, three great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. He is also survived by Jeanne's brother and sister-in-law (John and Jo Litter), with whom he was close throughout his life.

The family is being assisted by James Sircy and Jackie Fulford of Young Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory.

Tribute Wall



“ *J Carter Perkins*

October 22, 2023 at 10:27 PM



“ *J Carter Perkins*

October 09, 2023 at 11:25 AM