



Richard Joseph Herbst

October 6, 1930 - February 21, 2023

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Richard Joseph Herbst, 92, died peacefully on February 21 surrounded by the comfort and love of his wife, all five children and other family members.

Born October 6, 1930, in Pittsburgh, PA, to John Herbst and Alice Ferry Herbst, RJ grew up with his beloved older brother, Bob, (d. 2008)) in McKees Rocks and Brookline and graduated from St Justin's High School. He served in the Korean War from 1952 to 1954, stationed in Germany where he had the opportunity to travel by train throughout Europe.

He graduated from Duff's Business School and started his first job in Pittsburgh with Canadian Pacific Railroad.

He married Patricia Carlisle, the love of his life, in 1955 and was soon transferred to Chicago, where he worked until moving to Bethlehem, PA in 1964 for a job with Bethlehem Steel. He was transferred to Pittsburgh in 1973 and became District Transportation Manager in 1976. Two years later he was named to the same position in the former Lackawanna plant in Buffalo, NY. He retired from the company in Bethlehem in 1993.

He made himself at home wherever he landed and if he had a motto, it was “Make the most of what life gives you and be grateful.” He did and he was.

RJ was a devoted father and husband and friend who radiated love and had a great zest for life. He was passionate about many things, from eagles, trains and lighthouses to Roberto Clemente, Frank Sinatra and dessert -- at any time of the day.

An avid reader, he enjoyed books of all kinds, especially history books, and he loved doing crossword puzzles in ink (and getting help from his kids). He was also a devout Catholic, and active in the church where he was a lector and usher. He was an astute investor as well and enjoyed counseling his kids in financial matters.

While RJ was very smart and knowledgeable in many areas, he was probably best known for his great sense of humor. He had a knack for puns, good and bad, and telling jokes and making people laugh. While he was truly hilarious, no one laughed harder at his own jokes than RJ. He loved birthdays, especially his own, and our family finally decreed that his would last the entire month of October.

He and Pat loved to throw parties for their friends and their kids remember loud and laughter-filled New Year's Eve parties that lasted long past midnight.

Years ago, they were in a group of longtime friends in Bethlehem called the In and Out of Towners for their frequent corporate moves. RJ initiated the novel idea at the time of having the men make dinner for their wives and clean up, too. It was written about in the daily newspaper.

He was truly a people person (he adored Barbra Streisand and her song “People”) who treated everyone with respect, from toll booth workers he

warmly greeted, to folks he saw on his daily walks in the mall in his last years. He knew how to make people feel special and in return, he was showered with love.

More than anything, RJ loved his family and reveled in their triumphs more than his own. He leaves an incredible legacy along with his wife, Patricia of 68 years, which includes five children: Patti (Rob) Schirripa, Tracy (Nick) Certo, Karen (Tom) Geldard, Greg (Simm) Herbst and Rich (Coleen) Herbst and 15 grandchildren: Amanda (Jim) Kohler, Robbie (Allie) Schirripa, Sarah (Angela) Geldard, Rachel (Dan) Peabody, Daniel Certo, Jonathan (Beth) Geldard, Matthew (Sheila) Schirripa, Jessica (Andrew) Herbst,, Katie (Mike) Herbst, Andrew (Rachael) Certo, Tyler Herbst, Morgan (Devon) Dekowski, Peyton Herbst, and Henna and Stella Herbst.

He also was proud great-grandfather to: Conrad, Brooklynn, Alexander, Wesley, Madison, Lukas, Isaac, Dominic, Colson, Wilhelmina, Leanna, Andrew, Samuel and MaryGrace.

His greatest love was always his wise and spiritual wife, Pat, who was at his bedside as he took his last breath. His last gift to us was allowing us all to gather to give him the sendoff he deserved. We were so lucky for so long to have him in our lives, and we have much to be grateful for.

As he told us all shortly before he died, he lived a full life and there was nothing more he could ask for. That's all we can ask for, too. He will shine through us all in our own love of life and our love for each other.

Our family wants to give special thanks to his third child, Karen, and her amazing husband, Tom, who gave Dad the best in care the final few years and allowed him to die in peace at their home. We are forever grateful.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be held on March 11, 2023 at 10:00 am at the Church of the Resurrection (where RJ and Pat were married) at 1100 Creedmore Avenue in Brookline (Pittsburgh).. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to your favorite veterans' group.

Comments are welcome in the guest book.

Tribute Wall

AH

“ I am sorry for your loss. I remember listening to operas with RJ blasting loud and singing together. What a kind man! Love to all!
Ann Herbst

Ann Herbst - March 01, 2023 at 09:00 AM

CD

“ Pat and Family,
Larry and I offer our deepest condolences and prayers as you mourn Dick's passing.
St. Irenaeus said, "The glory of God is the human person fully alive." There is no better the way to describe Dick. I have so many memories of him at Assumption Parish, beginning with our working together on the parish retreat team right up to the dinners at your lovely home, Pat. He loved God; he loved you all and was so proud of you. He loved others, making people feel special and welcome. His life was a blessing to us, and I am sure he will continue to ask God to send blessings to you and us all through his intercession. This planet and our lives are better for having known Dick. He was indeed a man of God.
You thoroughly enjoyed and lived life here, Dick. I have no doubt that the party continues in eternity!
Love and prayers,
Chris Durback

Christina Durback - February 28, 2023 at 07:39 AM

JM

“ Eternal rest grant to him oh Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon him! With Love and prayers,
Jenny and Ernie Modarelli

Jenny Modarelli - February 27, 2023 at 03:57 PM

ML

“ Dear pat and family. Our deepest sympathies on the passing of dear Dick Herpst. What a fabulous guy and you were the cutest devoted couple to each other your family and the church. I've missed seeing your smiling faces. Love molly and mike lieberman.

Molly Lieberman - February 27, 2023 at 07:02 AM

BR

“ Dear Pat and Family,

I was so sad to read of Dick's passing. As you may remember Pat, I was Dick's administrative assistant when he was the Manager of Transportation at the Corporate Headquarters in Bethlehem. Dick was a great mentor to me as one of the young pups in the department. He was not only a great mentor to me on the job but about life in general. Also Pat I remember you as a beautiful loving person. Both my husband and I who also worked at Bethlehem Steel send our deepest sympathies.
Barbara Cuth Reynolds

Barb Reynolds - February 26, 2023 at 01:06 PM

JD

“ Dear Pat and family, It was so sad to read of Dick's passing in the paper this morning. We were so fortunate to have you and Dick as neighbors all those years. You are in my thoughts and prayers, Pat. take care. Janet Doyle

Janet Doyle - February 26, 2023 at 12:34 PM

HK

“ To the Herbst family,
Was so saddened to see the passing of your dear husband, father,
grandfather and great- grandfather. Your family has a special place
in my heart growing up in Bethlehem and my good friend Patti.
Sending hugs and prayers during this most difficult time.
Holly Haines Kent

Holly Kent - February 26, 2023 at 11:23 AM

LJ

“ Dear Pat and family,
I was so sorry to hear of Dick's passing this morning when it was
announced at Mass. Please know your prayers are with you all
during this sad time. May our Mother of Sorrows watch over all of
you and help you find consolation. May he rest in peace.
Sincerely,
Lou James

Lou James - February 26, 2023 at 11:15 AM

JL

“ I knew Dick from the HTCC gym, and the neighborhood. It was
always a pleasure to see and chat with Dick and Pat. My
condolences to the family.
Jean Larkin

Jean Larkin - February 26, 2023 at 08:31 AM

JB

“ We knew Dick and Pat from our parish church in Bethlehem. Truly a
delightful couple; devoted to family and faith. Our sympathies to Pat
and the entire family.
Tim and Janet Belletti

Janet Belletti - February 25, 2023 at 07:32 PM