



Jay Gordon Klehfoth

June 8, 1945 - December 16, 2020

CENTERVILLE, Ind. – Jay Gordon Klehfoth, age 75, of Centerville, Indiana, died unexpectedly Wednesday, December 16, 2020, at his home.

Born and raised in Richmond, Indiana, Jay graduated from Richmond High School in 1963. He attended Purdue University and graduated from Indiana University in 1967 with a B.S. in Business Administration, majoring in marketing and finance. Jay completed the MBA program at Miami University of Ohio in 1971, after serving as an officer in the United States Air Force.

After his stint in the Air Force, Jay returned to Philco-Ford in Connersville, Indiana, serving in various financial management positions. In addition, he owned and operated Yankee Farm Antiques in Cambridge City, Indiana.

In 1976, Jay accepted a position on corporate staff at Ford's World Headquarters in Dearborn, Michigan. Initially, he served as a liaison with Ford of Europe. Later, Jay was assigned to work with Ford's Diversified Products Operations (Ford's non-automotive businesses). In 1979, he became an internal business consultant, acting as a consultant to the executive vice president level and above of the company.

In 1981, Jay accepted the position of Assistant Vice President of Finance and Planning with W.R. Grace's Natural Resources Group, located in Dallas,

Texas. He was deeply involved in taking the group public. The new company, Grace Energy, was traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

While in Dallas, Jay became associated with a local chapter of the Model T Ford Club of America (MTFCA), a nonprofit California corporation founded in 1965 and dedicated to the history and preservation of the Model T Ford. Model Ts had been a love of Jay's since purchasing his first car, a 1927 Model T coupe, at the age of 13, a car still in his family today.

In 1989, while working for Grace, Jay accepted the responsibility of editing "The Vintage Ford," the official magazine of MTFCA. In 1992, he and his wife, Barbara, added the business office to their responsibilities and Jay was awarded the title of Chief Executive Officer. In addition to running the club, they were credited with gaining a 501(c)3 educational nonprofit status for the club. The MTFCA is one of the world's largest antique car clubs with members in all 50 states and 41 foreign countries. The club has over 125 chapters around the world.

In 1999, Jay and Barbara purchased the Malone House, an 1835 Federal-style row house in Centerville. After extensive restoration was begun, they moved to their "new" old home in May 2000. They also moved the publication and business offices of the MTFCA to their home in Centerville, as well as their three Model Ts – a 1927 coupe, a 1926 dirt track racer, and a 1923 English-built Model T town car.

Jay and Barbara enjoyed their historic home and the area. They became active in local organizations and enjoyed collecting antiques.

Jay served on the Board of Trustees (President for 2004-2005) of the Centerville-Center Township Public Library and was past President of Promote Centerville, Inc. He was a member and past director of the

Centerville Lions Club. Jay was also a member and past director of the Wayne County Historical Museum. Jay and his wife, Barbara, were Life Members of Historic Centerville, Inc. and Friends of the Library. Additionally, they were members of the Cope Environmental Center, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, and other local organizations.

Survivors include his wife of 35 years, Barbara Mauzy Klehfoth; children, Jennifer (Daniel) Hollandbeck of Bainbridge, Indiana, Alex (Jayme) Klehfoth of Helena, Montana, and Cheri (Lyle) Pearson of Columbus, Ohio; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; brother, John E. (Kristal) Klehfoth of Elkhart, Indiana; two nieces; nephew; and many friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Gordon Walter and Mary Emery Klehfoth.

A memorial service for Jay Gordon Klehfoth will be announced by the family at a later date. Arrangements are being handled by Mills Funeral Home, 405 East Main Street, Centerville.

Memorial contributions may be made to: Model T Ford Club of America, P.O. Box 996, Richmond, IN 47375 or 2nd Chance Animal Rescue of Richmond, Inc., 2905 US Highway 35 N, Richmond, IN 47374-9707, in honor of Jay's love of animals.

Condolences may be sent to the family via the guest book at www.doanmillsfuneralhome.com.

Tribute Wall



“ I am so sorry for your loss. Jay was the nicest and most generous man to my sister that could have ever been.

He was a wonderful brother-in-law and will be missed greatly by many.

My deepest sympathy to my sister Barbara and all his loved ones..

Janet Mauzy



Janet Mauzy - December 23, 2020 at 07:44 PM

SC

“ Barbara,
Im so sorry for the loss, you meant alot to him, he meant alot to me too. He was a mentor in my youth, now at 56 not 16 when i met him, he was working for Ford as an exec yet he treated this 16 yr old with Respect and trusted me to watch his home when he was out of town anf cut his lawn. He was still my guide in life. I wish we could have visited in person, but we will all be together again in Gods kindom for certain. He said you were sweethearts in high school, and a class reunion you reconnected. I have been fortunate with my wife, I understood his joy with you. You will be in pur prayers, our love to you, God Bless
Reverend Sydney and Tammy

Tammy Syd Chase

Sydney Chase - December 21, 2020 at 12:28 AM

RC

“ I first met Jay when we both worked in the Financial Analysis Department at Philco-Ford in Connersville. Later my husband Ron and I were volunteers at the Great "T" Party. Jay was a great man who accomplished so much and helped so many.

Ronda Christopher - December 20, 2020 at 08:42 PM

WC

“ My heart is so sad. to hear of Jay's passing. Jay and Barb were a part of my journey for a very short season, but I treasure the memories of polishing his first Motel T at their first museum in Centerville, in preparation for transportation to the new one in Richmond. Peace be with all who were touched by Jay's life. My sympathy to all of his loved ones. Chris Watkins

Watkins Christine - December 20, 2020 at 08:31 PM

 Judy Moore

“ Jay was the nicest person anyone could have the privilege to meet. He was a great brother-in-law, father, husband and friend. He will be greatly missed by all that knew him. Our deepest sympathy to my sister Barbara and family.

Judy Moore - December 20, 2020 at 11:05 AM

JR

“ So sorry to learn of Jay's passing this week. He was a great guy and could tell the history of almost any car and model. What a thrill for our county to hold the 100th anniversary of the Model T here in 2008 with Jay helping so much. We have lost a good man who did good things and was fun for everyone he met and a Lion too. Our sincere sympathy to Barbara and family. Jim and Sandra Resh

James Resh - December 18, 2020 at 10:09 PM

BS

“ Never had a minute with Jay I was not being informed about Automotive history and laughing. Barbara and Jay are very special people and I really appreciate what they did for 25 years with the MTFCA, MUSEUM AND 100 MODEL T ANNIVERSARY,



Bill Sherrill - December 18, 2020 at 08:20 PM

BM

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this difficult time.

Bob Clark and the Staff of Doan & Mills - December 18, 2020 at 03:56 PM

GM

Chuck and I are saddened to hear of Jay's passing. Praying for the family. Jay was a wonderful man.

Gwen and Chuck McGill - December 18, 2020 at 08:23 PM

PB

Jay will be so missed. He was always there in your heart and thoughts even when he wasn't there. I can still see him as we were talking on several occasions. He was an unforgettable person. May God bless you and your family at this time of sorrow.

Phillip J Benedict - December 19, 2020 at 08:28 AM

PM

We had much in common with Jay and Barb; antiques, old houses, Centerville living, working at Ford, being in the military and we were volunteers for the Model T 100th celebration week. Jerry helped with construction of the new museum and donated book shelves for its library. We appreciate all that Jay contributed to Wayne County in so many ways. Our hearts are heavy with the loss of our great friend and go out to Barbara and his family.

Jerry and Phyllis Mattheis, Cambridge City

Phyllis Mattheis - December 21, 2020 at 07:33 AM