

## **Cleve Emil Carney**

Died: July 31, 2013

Cleve died on Wednesday, July 31, 2013, at his home in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. He was 74 years old. About eight years before his death he was diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP), complications from which led to his death. The disease, says the National Institutes of Health, "is a rare brain disorder that causes serious and progressive problems with control of gait and balance, along with complex eye movement and thinking problems."

Cleve grew up in Wheaton, Illinois, about three miles away from Glen Ellyn. His parents owned the Carney Bakery in downtown Wheaton. Cleve graduated with honors from Wheaton Community High School, where he was class president his senior year. He was sports editor of the high school newspaper, played in the band, participated in dramatics, and was on the wrestling team.

At Dartmouth, Cleve majored in economics, and was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE). He became a member of Green Key his junior year, and Dragon during his senior year. He was a member of the swimming team all four years, and, with fraternity brother Charlie Brown, swam on a relay team which was officially ranked All-America.

After Dartmouth, Cleve served in the Navy as a lieutenant junior grade, as a "frogman," as he referred to it, with the Underwater Demolition Team (UDT).

Bob Shearer '61 picks up the narrative of Cleve's life history post-Navy in an e-mail remembrance dated Oct. 4, 2013.

"I didn't know Cleve all that well at Dartmouth, but he and I, along with my Zate fraternity brother, Bob Garrity, ended up at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business in March, 1965, following release from active military duty. I came from the Marines, and Cleve and Bob were in the Navy," Bob writes.

"Cleve had been in the Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) branch of the Navy, a result, probably, of his Dartmouth Swimming Team experience, and he was no stranger to physical effort and exercise. He organized a workout program where a bunch of us met on the then-unused campus football field between classes a few times during the week. He and I developed a good-natured rivalry during these sessions based on our military background — "dumb swabbie," "stupid jarhead," that kind of thing. He was a terrific guy, and I'll always be grateful for that time at U. Chicago. I wasn't aware until recent years of his considerable philanthropic efforts, in his home area, greater Chicago, and Dartmouth. He was a major force behind the Class of 1961 Legacy, which supports the Hop."

Bob finished his e-mail with these words: "Just let me say this: Cleve, old buddy, rest well."

After he earned his M.B.A. from the University of Chicago, Cleve became, as he wrote in his 25<sup>th</sup> Reunion recollection, “a father, businessman, community activist, and physical fitness enthusiast.”

On the occasion of being away from college for 25 years, and from his home in Wheaton, to which he had returned, Cleve wrote about first arriving in Hanover.

“In August of 1957, Bill Glenn and I were driven to Dartmouth by an avid alumnus. We were roommates one year, and for the last fifteen years,” he wrote in 1986, “have had a successful and rewarding business association while still remaining best of friends. I have the good fortune of enjoying the work I do at Olsson Roofing.”

The two classmates co-owned Olssen Roofing Company, whose website now says the company is almost 100 years old and is one of the largest qualified roofing companies in the United States. See: <http://www.olssonroofing.com/>.

By our 35<sup>th</sup> reunion, ten years later, Cleve had moved to the home in Glen Ellyn where he lived until he passed away.

On the occasion of our 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion in 2001, Cleve wrote only briefly for the reunion yearbook, noting that he had retired in 1989 as vice-president and partner at Olsson Roofing Company, “having made some lucky guesses on the stock market,” as he later put it in our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion yearbook, “Paths We’ve Taken.”

Among the lucky guesses, as The Chicago Tribune wrote on August 12, 2013, after Cleve had died, he “purchased and sold the Bank of Batavia to Gary-Wheaton Bank, an investment that allowed him to retire early and devote himself to art, golf, and philanthropy.”

In his recollection for the 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion in 2011, Cleve wrote that, “I continue to look back on my Dartmouth days as some of the best in my life.”

He knew when he wrote those words, two years before his death, of his terrible diagnosis, “I am disappointed to report that I have a degenerative disease,” he said. It was PSP. It “acts much like Lou Gehrig’s disease. I get dizzy easily and have a hard time doing basic things like moving, eating and talking. But I am still the same old Cleve Carney on the inside. I love my kids, good food, a good joke, my art collection, and of course the company of my many friends.”

Cleve was a dedicated philanthropist and art collector. He wrote for our 50<sup>th</sup>, that since retiring, “I have spent most of my time supporting and promoting contemporary visual artists, theater groups, community organizations like the DuPage Community Foundation, which named me ‘Philanthropist of the Year’ in 2007, the B. R. Ryall YMCA, The Hyde Park Art Center, and the Wheaton Sanitary District, where I remain on the Board of Directors.”

Cleve had served on the Sanitary District board for 38 years and overseen the district's most expensive construction project in its history. He also was Chairman of the DuPage Community Foundation Board for eight years, served on the board for 17 years, and donated \$1.25 million to the organization.

For our 50<sup>th</sup> reunion, Cleve wrote what must be considered an understatement. "I have been an avid art collector for many years," he said.

A close friend and business colleague of Cleve's, Mark Wight, is quoted in the DuPage Daily Herald as saying, "Cleve's Glen Ellyn home was covered head-to-toe in contemporary art, not only on the walls, but also on the ceilings, floors and stairs."

In February 2014, the College of DuPage's Glen Ellyn campus opened the Cleve Carney Art Gallery at the McAninch Arts Center with an exhibition featuring selections from his immense art collection.

Cleve had just given an in-kind donation to the College of DuPage from his immense art collection, thought to be worth \$300,000. With it, in 2012 he had also contributed \$700,000 to the college. These two donations, together with another \$100,000 he had previously given, made his contribution (an estimated \$1.1 million) to the college the largest gift in the College's 46-year history.

In a preview of the opening exhibition at the Carney Gallery, the Daily Herald, the suburban newspaper for DuPage County (Feb. 5, 2014), wrote that the Gallery's first show will feature "selections from Carney's massive collection of 800 paintings, sculptures and other pieces of contemporary modern art he bought during travels around the world. Carney bequeathed 40 percent of his collection with the intent that it display around the [College of DuPage] campus."

Cleve and his dedication to art are celebrated in a YouTube remembrance. See: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfE\\_evQk1Nc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfE_evQk1Nc)

Over the years, after Dartmouth, Cleve was active in alumni affairs. He served on the Class Executive Committee (1997-2013), the Reunion Committee (2001), was a Class Agent, and a Leadership Agent (2001-2003, 2004-2007).

Cleve was twice divorced. He has three grown children: Cleve Jr., Jennifer, and Daniel.