



Stetson's
FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATION CARE



Richard (Sonny) Fortin

Aug. 20, 1929 ~ Jun. 23, 2023

Brunswick-Richard E. "Sonny" Fortin died peacefully at his home in Brunswick on June 23, 2023, at the age of 93, with his wife Deborah by his side. He was born on August 21, 1929, in Brunswick ME to Victor L. Fortin and Alice G. LeBeau. He attended Brunswick schools, swimming and running cross country and track in high school, and worked alongside his father in the family business, Fortin's Furniture and Appliances on Pleasant Street. In 1950, he enlisted in the U.S. Army where he served in Korea on the front lines in the 24th Infantry Division as a staff sergeant for two years. In 1955, he married Theresa A. Skaling and they settled in a home next door to his parents. Married for 23 years, they had six children together. For the next 25 years he managed Fortin's Furniture, selling the business in 1981. He also managed several properties. Following that he worked for several years at LL Bean.

While he ran the business, he was also the busy father of six children. Winters were filled with skiing at Sugarloaf and skating at the Bowdoin arena, deer and duck hunting and summers with boating, fishing for bluefish, mackerel and stripers, trips to Popham Beach and Old Orchard, golf (as one of the founding members of the present-day Brunswick Golf Club) and large family cookouts with his favorites - lobster, steak and blueberry pie. He also achieved a pilot's solo certificate for a J-3 cub in 1972 and was active in the Brunswick Kiwanis Club and the Knights of Columbus. He loved home cooked food and making crepes and creton for his family.

In August 1996, Sonny married Deborah Jean Sirois, and they settled in the Fortin family home, built by his grandfather in 1890. Sonny often commented how fortunate he was to have met Deborah, and would say, "If not for Debbie, I would have been gone 20 years ago!" Sonny and Deborah enjoyed wonderful times together on their boat fishing and exploring Casco Bay, traveling, entertaining family and friends, working in their yard, hunting for antiques and walks with their beloved Boston Terrier, Ruby.

As a lifelong resident of Brunswick, Sonny shared many stories about the area, recalling when all the streets were dirt, skating on The Androscoggin River all the way to Pejepscot and the flooding of the swinging bridge. He was the consummate storyteller and was always ready to share a good joke. Recently, he worked with the Pejepscot History Center in Brunswick to record his memories of growing up in the area. He was an accomplished swimmer, water skier and golfer, achieving an eagle on the 15th hole in the Fall of 2021 at the age of 92! In addition, Sonny had three holes-in-one over the years. His curiosity about the world meant that he followed the world news, politics and the stock market closely. A self-taught man, he did many of the repairs on his properties including plumbing, electrical and carpentry. From repairing televisions and appliances, installing roof top TV antennas, and household repairs, he was a man of many talents. He was enormously proud of his 10 grandchildren and their accomplishments. He was a true friend, generous of his time and talents, and always willing to lend a helping hand at the drop of a hat. His joie de vivre was infectious, and everyone loved him for it.

Richard is survived by his wife Deborah of 27 years, five daughters, Anne and Jim Reilly of Falmouth ME and their daughter Meghan (and fiancé Jesse Gaboury) and Isabelle Raphial (and husband Chris); Michele and Craig Baranowski of Falmouth ME and their daughters, Olivia and Juliana; Debra and Roy Knight of S. Harpswell ME and their children Rachael Verhoeven (and husband, PJ); William (and wife Jessica) and Ryan (and partner Erin); Simone and Lorian Lachance of Brunswick ME and their children Jason (and wife Christine) and Julie Anne Puleio (and husband Miles); Nicole and Scott Farrell of Falmouth ME and their daughters Alta and Gabrielle; and his son, Richard and Julie Fortin of Brunswick ME. He also has seven great grandchildren, Lily and Wesley, children of Jason and Christine, Ava and Blake, daughters of Rachael and PJ; Kaydance, Barrett and Quinn, children of William and Jessica and Sebastian, son of Isabelle and Chris. He is also survived by Deborah's family, her mother Viola and sisters,

Rose, Michelle and Elizabeth who came to love and admire him as part of their family, as well as 17 nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his brother, Victor Fortin, Jr. (and wife Prisca Drapeau) and his sister, Alice (Sis) Thalheimer (and husband Harold).

A mass of Christian burial will be held on Friday, July 7 at 9:30 AM at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church at 39 Pleasant Street, Brunswick, ME followed by a private burial at St. John's Cemetery in Brunswick. A public reception to celebrate his life will be held at the St. John's Parish Hall at approximately 11:30.

In lieu of flowers, the family would prefer donations to Honor Flight Maine, PO Box 699, Brunswick, ME 04011-0699 honorflightmaine.org or the Pejepscot History Center, 159 Park

Arrangements are by Stetson's Funeral Home, 12 Federal St., Brunswick, where condolences, memories and photos may be shared with the family at www.stetsonsfuneralhome.com