

Richard "Dick" Farnum Winter (July 29, 1937 - March 13, 2025) 19th Company

Richard Farnum Winter, 87, of Colfax, North Carolina, and formerly of Freeport, Long Island, passed away at 8:08 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at his residence.

"Dick" Winter was born July 29, 1937, in Paterson, New Jersey. He was the middle son of Margaret Ternamian Winter and Clement Winter, bookended by older brother, David Leon Winter and younger brother, Robert Aljian Winter.

Dick grew up in a Brownstone in Brooklyn, New York, the ground floor of which was a hardware store owned and operated by his maternal grandfather. His family lived on the middle floor and his grandparents on the top.

In 1941, his family moved to Freeport, Long Island, where he earned exceptional grades through middle and high school, receiving numerous awards, scholarships and membership in the National Honor Society.

As a young teen, Dick was a foot courier in Manhattan and discovered that by running his route he could both deliver parcels ahead of schedule and pocket his train fare. That led him to excel in athletics at Freeport High School, where he was a varsity wrestler and a varsity one-miler on the Track and Field team.

In Dick's senior year, he discovered an aptitude for Cross Country, in which he also lettered. In his first 2.5-mile race, he finished second to the state champion – who set a new record that day – only seconds ahead of Dick, who had just beaten the first-place finisher's past record.

Dick had his sights set on attending the United States Naval Academy with the goal of saving his parents the burden of college tuition. He earned an appointment in 1955 and had outstanding academic marks all four years, while running on both the Cross Country and Track teams. He was selected as captain of the Cross Country team by his teammates and was the first ever second-year midshipman ("youngster") to be named as a team captain, as well as the first midshipman to ever serve in that role for consecutive years, until his graduation in 1959.

After Dick was commissioned, he served as a naval officer for 27 years, 19 of which were at sea, and achieved the rank of Captain.

He served on the USS Bache, a Fletcher-class escort Destroyer, and the USS Dahlgren, a Farragut-class guided missile Destroyer during the U.S. 13-day naval quarantine of Cuba, which would later be known as the Cuban Missile Crisis, and during which the Soviets attempted to install nuclear missiles in Cuba.

In 1963, Dick received orders to report to legendary Admiral Hyman G. Rickover who persuaded him to "volunteer" for the elite nuclear powered submarine program

the United States was developing as a crucial element of deterrence for the rising cold war with Russia.

He went on to serve on the USS Tecumseh (SSBN-628), a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine armed with nuclear warheads, followed by a 4-year Command of the James K. Polk (SSBN-645), a strategic nuclear-powered missile submarine. In 1978, Dick was assigned to shore duty at the Pentagon which provided him time to rekindle his childhood interest in philately, to reconnect with family after many years at sea, and to pursue a post-retirement second career that established him as one of America's preeminent postal historians.

Dick was an internationally esteemed writer, researcher, speaker, collector and exhibitor of maritime postal history, with a special interest in transatlantic steamship mail. He co-authored North Atlantic Mail Sailings 1840-75 and edited United States Incoming Steamship Mail, 1847-1875, and Understanding Transatlantic Mail and North Atlantic Non-Contract Steamship Sailings, 1838-1875 with his dear friend John H. Barwis. The latter book was awarded the American Philatelic Society's eponymous "Richard F. Winter Cup."

Dick also authored peer-reviewed articles too numerous to count, including a final article co-authored with three esteemed colleagues for the North Carolina Postal History Society which was accepted for publication three weeks before his passing. Dick's work for the philatelic community has been recognized through numerous awards, including the Distinguished Philatelist Award of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, the American Philatelic Society's John N. Luff Award for Distinguished Philatelic Research, and the Collectors Club of New York's Lichtenstein Award. In 2008 he signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. He also joined the National Postal Museum's Council of Philatelists in the fall of 2003 as a representative of the collector community.

Dick served as a Trustee of the Philatelic Foundation, a member of the National Postal Museum's Council of Philatelists, and as a member of the International Association of Philatelic Experts. In 2016, he was honored by the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum, which announced him as a winner of the Smithsonian Philatelic Achievement Award (SPAA).

His service also included countless gifts of effective leadership, at various times serving as Director, Vice President and President of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society, Vice Chairman of the North Carolina Postal History Commission, and President of the North Carolina Postal History Society.

Dick was loved and will be remembered by his friends and classmates and his neighbors at River Landing, the retirement community where he has lived since 2012.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Gretchen Van Osdell Winter; and his sons, Richard Keith (Diane) Winter and Kenneth Andrew (Lyn) Winter; and grandchildren, Danielle (Carson) Lay, Nicholas Winter, Jonah Winter and Luke Winter.

A memorial service will be held Friday, March 21, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., at River Landing at Sandy Ridge, 1575 John Knox Drive, Colfax, North Carolina. A future service and burial will be held at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Condolences may be sent to the family online on Dick's tribute page at www.cumbyfuneral.com.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the American Philatelic Society Research Library in Dick's name, Care of Scott English, Director of the American Philatelic Society, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823. Please specify donation to support the Richard F. Winter special collection.

Cumby Family Funeral Service in High Point is serving the Winter family.

Farewell Dick...we wish you fair winds and a following sea.

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<https://www.cumbyfuneral.com/obituaries/Richard-Dick-Farnum-Winter?obId=39244351>