



Roderic D Tuttle

June 30, 1938 - December 14, 2023

Roderic D. Tuttle 1938-2023

Roderic David Tuttle, 85, of Seal Rock, Oregon, died on December 14, 2023, at Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital in Newport, Oregon. He spent his last day at home on the beautiful Oregon coast, in the company of his son, Geoffrey Tuttle, and having enjoyed his daily phone conversation with his longtime companion, Tori Butler.

Rod was born in Los Angeles, California on June 30, 1938 to Lois Hope (Chamberlin) Tuttle (“Hope”) and Ronald Warren Tuttle. His household, including his younger sister, Lois Rosemary Tuttle, and his grandmother, Juanita Chamberlin, resided first in Westwood and then in Sierra Madre, in view of the Mt. Wilson Observatory, where the family moved for the sake of Rod’s delicate health. In 1945, when Rod was 7 years old, his father died. This unsettled Rod’s life, forcing him to develop both resilience and self-reliance.

Upon Ronald Tuttle’s death, the family moved abruptly to New York, where Rod attended boarding school in Poughkeepsie, then returned the following year to Riverside, California, where Rod, having contracted pneumonia with measles, convalesced in an oxygen tent at the Mission Inn. Rod then attended Polytechnic School in Pasadena, the Huntington School in San Marino, and Emerson Jr. High School in West Lost Angeles before moving east once again due to his mother’s brief remarriage. After short stays in Mifflinburg and York, Pennsylvania; Long Island, New York; and White River Junction, Vermont, the

family made the long, slow trek home to California in a 1948 Mercury Coupe, towing their belongings in a spoke-wheeled utility trailer, with Hope and 14-year-old Rod sharing the driving. Rod then attended San Marino High School, from which he graduated in 1957.

Rod was fortunate to obtain a liberal arts education at Occidental College in Eagle Rock, California (class of 1961), which greatly enriched his life. It was at Oxy that he met his future wife, Judith Hiatt; perpetrated myriad hijinks with and at the expense of his roommate, James Hardy; and nurtured his lifelong intellectual curiosity. To his last days, he would find consolation in reciting Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" from memory and would rejoice in testing out German phrases for his granddaughter, Sage, and amusing her with remembered lines from Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky." While in college, he studied abroad in Lausanne, Switzerland and worked as a projectionist and tour guide at the Griffith Observatory, where he perfected his public speaking skills. In 1962, after graduation, Rod and Judy were married in Pasadena, CA. After a brief stint at George Washington University, for which he had been awarded a Scottish Rite Fellowship, Rod earned his Master's Degree in political science in 1964 from UCLA, concentrating in African studies. This work was supported by a National Defense Foreign Language Fellowship (for Swahili) and his part-time job as a syringe-cart boy at UCLA Medical Center, together with his wife's income. Rod and Judy soon settled in Fair Oaks, California, where their two children, Jennifer and Geoffrey, were born, and Rod began his career in California State legislative affairs. His consulting work ultimately led to his appointment by then-Governor Jerry Brown as Chief Deputy Director for Legislative and Legal Affairs of the State Parks Department. He found his true calling, though, in teaching about the legislative process, work he began at UC Davis Extension, continued for the California Journal, and then maintained for 15 years through his own business, Legislative Seminars. Using the tag line "How the System Works and How to Work the System," he taught public affairs workshops on demystifying the legislative process, which he held at various locations around Sacramento,

such as the Delta King and the Sutter Club.

During this time, after he and Judy divorced, Rod enjoyed living in a quiet neighborhood just a few miles from the Capitol building, exchanging banter at the Taylor's Market meat counter, treating his kids to ice cream at Vic's and to indulgent brunches at the Fox & Goose, and shooting the breeze with fellow patrons at the Virgin Sturgeon. It was in this Sacramento house that he hosted many a holiday meal, taking in any who wanted to join; doted on his mother in her last years; and met his sweetheart, Tori, at that time his neighbor across the back fence.

For the last 15 years of his life, Rod lived in Seal Rock, Oregon, having settled with Tori in her home state. He loved the home he dubbed "Vista del Beaver," surrounded as it was by trees as far as the eye could see, with Beaver Creek winding through the valley below. His house, some five miles up an unpaved road from the ocean, was hard to get to, and that's just how he liked it. The reward for negotiating his steep, often pitted, and thickly forested driveway was bursting into a small clearing to find his cozy home and the outbuildings he built, most notably the yurt greenhouse that housed his garden. He delighted every day in his beautiful view and in scattering seeds for the birds; in the colder months, he enjoyed tinkering with his wood stove, a necessity on which he often relied. He found great pleasure in his erudite and generous Beaver Creek community as well.

Rod always loved the beauty of remote places. In Alaska, with his father-in-law, Robert Hiatt, and brothers-in-law, Gerald and William Hiatt, he flew onto Nonvianuk Lake in a Grumman Widgeon aircraft for an 8-day float by raft down the Alagnak River; with then-wife, Judy, and his parents-in-law, Robert and Elizabeth Hiatt, he packed their two children into another seaplane to reach Brooks Camp in Katmai National Park and Preserve, sleeping in tents, hiking, and fishing among the lynx and grizzlies.

For many years, he enjoyed visiting Twin Lakes, just outside Bridgeport, California, beneath the Sawtooth Ridge and Sierra Crest, where he took

sprawling, off-trail hikes through the surrounding mountains with his loved ones, his Australian shepherd, Justin, running ahead, only the white tip of his tail visible. He especially loved hiking up to Tamarack Lake, enjoying a picnic lunch by the water. He raised his kids to share his love for wilderness, camping and hiking in Yosemite, Lassen Volcanic National Park, the Plumas National Forest, and many of the national parks of the Southwest, nature-related fun facts spilling from his lips all the while. He was an avid fisherman noted for his patience who could outwait even the cagiest trout or salmon. Rod was a charming conversationalist and raconteur, as well as a lover of foreign languages; in Newport, Oregon, he enjoyed many gatherings with Le Cercle Français. A talented carpenter, Rod enhanced all of his homes with decks, patios, additions, outbuildings, and other projects, all meticulously—and slowly—constructed. In all areas of his life, he was also master of the rig-up and the work-around. He was a wonderful cook who enjoyed the planning, preparation, and discussion of good food as much as he did the eating of it; he made a mean blackberry rhubarb cobbler. He was quick to laugh and had an irreverent sense of humor. Rod was a warm, kind, and thoughtful person who will be quite terribly missed.

He was predeceased by his parents, his sister, his dogs Stella, Justin, Shageluk, Gretchen, Snoopy, Cindy, Baron, Huckleberry Hound, Duke, and Blossom, and many companionable cats.

He is survived by his daughter, Jennifer Tuttle, son-in-law, David Kuchta, and granddaughter, Sage, of Portland, Maine; his son, Geoffrey Tuttle; and his longtime companion, Tori Butler, of Portland, Oregon and her wonderful family who always welcomed him into the fold; and his devoted dog, Pia.

There will be no service, but in his memory, friends are encouraged to spend some time in the woods, have a meaningful conversation with the most interesting person you know, or enjoy a slightly off-color joke. A family celebration of Rod's life will be held at a future date.