



Professor Emeritus
Rossman F. Giese, Jr.
January, 1936 – August, 2020

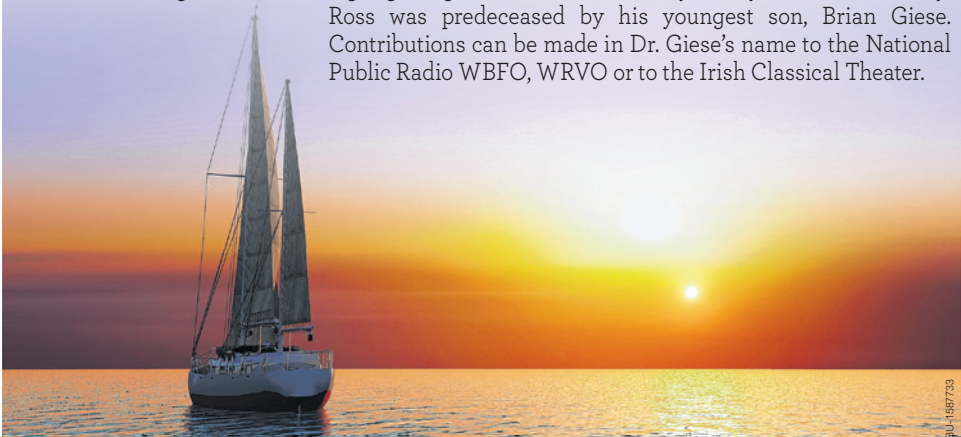
Passed away in his home, at peace, on August 1st, after a six year and at times successful fight against a vascular disorder of the brain. Dr. Giese donated his body to the University of Buffalo Medical School, a significant last act and an option for all. As he willed his temporal body to a greater good, he willed to us the influence of his thoughts, words and actions, such as the words he lived by: “It is what it is. Do what you can and then, move on.”

Dr. Giese earned his Bachelor’s, Master and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University, all by the age of 26. In 1961, Ross was appointed Senior Physicist of the Research and Development Division of the Carborundum Company, Niagara Falls, in 1966 he became Senior Cancer Research Scientist at the Center for Crystallographic Research, Roswell Park Memorial Institute under Dr. David Harker. At the time, he also began his 50 years of service in the Department of Geological Sciences, SUNY at Buffalo as a beloved teacher and productive research scientist specializing in clay mineralogy and eventually a department chair. Dr. Giese developed a method to measure the surface tension of fine particles, that had, until then, eluded scientists. Dr. Giese was also awarded two patents dealing with attaching antimicrobials to clay minerals to produce a pathogen killing material. He published 143 peer reviewed scientific articles and with Dr. Carel J. van Oss, he authored the book: Surface Thermodynamic Properties of Clays and Related Minerals.

Among Dr. Giese’s proudest accomplishments are his efforts to restore the historic Erie Canal terminus (the Commercial Slip). The Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC) wanted to rebury the original slip and build a replica next to it, fearing that the exposed rock wouldn’t hold up to Buffalo winters. Dr. Giese intervened, examined the rocks that lined the slip, and identified the rock as the same 400-million-year-old dolomitic limestone from the Onondaga Limestone Formation that underlies much of Buffalo, and can be seen in the walls of the Kensington Expressway. He noted that the exposed rock along the Kensington had endured 60 winters so far without issue and would likely endure thousands more. The ESDC relented, and the historic site was saved to become part of Buffalo’s Erie Canal heritage.

Dr. Giese was a loving husband, valued father, cherished grandfather, and adored great-grandfather. He was generous and caring. A man of few words, he was well-loved for his witty sense of humor. Fluent in French and German, he very much enjoyed reading, fine art, classical music and the opera. In his early days, he enjoyed rock climbing, bicycling and skiing. Later, he became an avid sailor, enjoyed racquet ball, was an accomplished wood-worker, learned to do plumbing, sewed his own jeans and dress shirts, became proficient on the pottery wheel, worked with stained glass, mastered the art of weaving, played the banjo and recently was learning to play the piano.

He will be dearly missed by wife, Patricia Costanzo, daughter Rebecca Costanzo and sons, David and Andrew Giese, along with Jennifer Marie, sister and brother-in-law Margaret and Paul Ulrich, ten grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and many family and friends. Sadly, Ross was predeceased by his youngest son, Brian Giese. Contributions can be made in Dr. Giese’s name to the National Public Radio WBFO, WRVO or to the Irish Classical Theater.



BU-1587733

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