



## Edgar Kent Merkle

March 23, 1937 - February 4, 2026

Edgar Kent Merkle of Chestertown, MD died peacefully on February 4, 2026. He was 88.

He was born in Washington, D.C. on March 23, 1937, the son of the late Edgar A. and Kathleen Merkle and brother of the late Shirley Ritter. Kent graduated from Georgetown Preparatory School (1955) and Georgetown University (1959). He served his country from 1961 to 1963 as a Lieutenant in the United States Army.

Thereafter, he began his career in publishing at the family business, Merkle Press. In the early 1970's, he left Merkle Press to form a partnership which launched a new publishing company where he stayed until his retirement in 1990.

He married Carole Nadine Suffridge in 1962. They enjoyed a beautiful union until her death in 2023.

Kent took a great interest in Catholic education and served as a Trustee and Chair of the Board of Trustees at The Mater Dei School in Bethesda, MD and served as a Trustee at Georgetown Preparatory School. In 1998, he was honored to have received the Insignis Medal from Georgetown Prep. The Insignis Medal, rooted in the Jesuit tradition of "Insignis in domino" — meaning "outstanding service to the Lord" — celebrates exceptional

dedication to community and faith. He was a member of Columbia Country Club, Congressional Country Club, Burning Tree Club, and Chester River Country Club. He also was a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Early in his life he had a great passion for golf with a scratch handicap. However, Kent found other ways to spend his time when he and Carole bought a farm in Kent County, MD in 1984 and relocated from Chevy Chase, MD permanently in 1998. His interests turned to the farm and the wildlife on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. A life-long fan of barbershop quartet music, he joined three other enthusiasts and joyfully sang barbershop for a number of years at local events. He also was proud to have been a member of the Chester River Chorale and enjoyed singing and making music. Kent deeply embraced the motto of being a “man for others” and was loved by all. He will be dearly missed for his affection, humor, intellect, sage advice, and cooking without a recipe.

He is survived by his children: Melanie Merkle Sieber (Kurt) of Chestertown, MD and Phillip Merkle (Debbie) of Bethesda, MD, his grandchildren: Gregory Sieber, Brooke Maxey (Garrett), Madeline Merkle, and Brian Merkle, his great grandchild: Kent Richard Maxey, and nephew: Lee Ritter (Gina).

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, February 14th at 10:00 AM at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Chestertown, MD. The service will be live -streamed. Relatives and friends are welcome to call at the church one hour prior to the service (9:00AM-10:00AM). Private interment will be in Old St. Paul's Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Kent's name to the Animal Care Shelter of Kent County, 10168 Worton Road, Chestertown, MD 21620.

# Previous Events

## Viewing

FEB 14. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
508 High St  
Chestertown, MD 21620-1314  
(410) 778-3160

## Funeral Mass

FEB 14. 10:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
508 High St  
Chestertown, MD 21620-1314  
(410) 778-3160

## Burial

FEB 14 (ET)

St. Paul's Episcopal Church Kent  
7760 Sandy Bottom Road  
Chestertown, MD

# Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle*



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**Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home** - February 09 at 10:47 AM

JT

*Kent was a Prep and Georgetown College classmate. I'll always remember his generosity to us boarders, recognizing that we were just kids a long way from home. He was a big guy with a big heart to match.*

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**Joe Tuthill** - February 10 at 08:15 PM

ME

*Thanks for sharing such a nice memory. He certainly did have a big heart and he loved his time at Prep.*

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**melanie** - February 11 at 09:51 AM

AL

“ *Ann L. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Edgar Kent Merkle.*

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**Ann L.** - February 14 at 01:26 PM

CT

“ *Carroll An Carol Thompson lit a candle in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle*



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**Carroll an Carol Thompson** - February 12 at 04:42 PM

SL

“ *Stephanie & Dan Lennon purchased the Joyful Memory for the family of Edgar Kent Merkle.*



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**Stephanie & Dan Lennon** - February 12 at 10:55 AM

SL

“ *Stephanie & Dan Lennon planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Edgar Kent Merkle.*

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**Stephanie & Dan Lennon** - February 12 at 10:55 AM

RB

“ As we mourn the loss of Mr.Merkle, we remember how every conversation with him was thought- provoking, inspiring and genuine. Mr & Mrs Merkle created a true treasure in “ the farm” a place that welcomed many of us over the years. As guests we shared many memories with friends and the Merkle’s themselves. Mr Merkle will be deeply missed, our heartfelt condolences go out to our dear friends Mel-Kurt-Greg- Brooke & Family. Phillip, Debbie & Family.

*Ron & Nancy Barnett*

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**Ron Barnett** - February 11 at 04:01 PM

MR

“ Max & Maryann Ruehrmund lit a candle in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle



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**Max & Maryann Ruehrmund** - February 11 at 03:17 PM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Edgar Kent Merkle.



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February 10 at 07:29 PM

KB

“ *Kaye & Barney Barnes lit a candle in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle*



**Kaye & Barney Barnes** - February 10 at 09:19 AM

KN

“ *Korynne, Josh, Kristen, and Natalie purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Edgar Kent Merkle.*



**Korynne, Josh, Kristen, and Natalie** - February 09 at 05:38 PM

JB

“ *Kent was a dear friend for many years. We had numerous conversations about the history of the farm, wildlife and religion. We will miss him.*



**Jack and Anne Bigelow** - February 09 at 04:29 PM

ME

*Starting with David and Nelda, the Bigalows' have been a wonderful part of our lives. Thank you, Jack and Anne, for always being so supportive. Jack, you have always gone above and beyond whenever we needed you. We are truly blessed to call you family.*

**melanie** - February 11 at 09:55 AM

RS

“ Richard van Stolk planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Edgar Kent Merkle.

Richard van Stolk - February 09 at 03:27 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Edgar Kent Merkle.



February 09 at 03:27 PM

LI

“ Luisa's Cucina Italiana lit a candle in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle



Luisa's Cucina Italiana - February 09 at 01:23 PM

ME

Thank you. Luisa's has been part of our family traditions for many years. Mom and Dad sure enjoyed the crab soup and the eggplant.

melanie - February 11 at 09:57 AM

LI

Don't forget the Linguine Vongole with extra clams!  
It was great talking with you tonight, though through holding back tears.

Luisa's Cucina Italiana - February 26 at 01:20 AM

CD

“ *Carrie Douthit lit a candle in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle*



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**Carrie Douthit** - February 09 at 11:44 AM

CD

*I so enjoyed working with Kent and Carole both over the years with 2 separate landscape companies. Just lovely people and both are now doubly missed. My heart goes out to his daughter, Melanie, and all the family. I pray your memories provide some peace during this time.*

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**Carrie Douthit** - February 09 at 11:45 AM

MS

*Thank you so much Carrie. I feel so blessed to have had such wonderful parents. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the future. Thanks for your kind words.*

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**Melanie Sieber** - February 09 at 03:03 PM

MW

“ *Marian Walbert Wyble lit a candle in memory of Edgar Kent Merkle*



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**Marian Walbert Wyble** - February 09 at 09:54 AM

MW

*I had the pleasure of singing with Mr. Merkle in the Chester River Chorale. He was a true gentleman. My sincere condolences to his family.*

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**Marian Walbert Wyble** - February 09 at 09:58 AM

MS

*Thank you so much Marian. He so loved singing in the Chorale. He will be deeply missed.*

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**Melanie Sieber** - February 09 at 03:03 PM

MW

“*Mr. and Mrs. Merkle were like a second set of parents for me. They were so wonderful to all of us! I will always fondly remember Mr. Merkle's chuckles at our sophomoric antics. My thoughts and prayers go out to the family during this difficult time. Mr. and Mrs. Merkle were one of a kind.*”

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**Mike Walsh** - February 09 at 09:04 AM

MS

*Thanks Mike. They were one of a kind. We are all so blessed to have so many wonderful memories.*

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**Melanie Sieber** - February 09 at 03:04 PM