



Terence Thomas Finn

August 1, 1942 - June 27, 2014

Terence T. Finn, retired federal civil servant, of Chestertown, MD, originally of Long Island, NY, died suddenly June 27, 2014. He was 71.

From 1966 to 1994, Finn's government career included positions at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and on Capitol Hill, with 16 of those years in the Senior Executive Service (SES).

At NASA, he was a charter member of the Space Station Task Force, and served as the agency's Director of Legislative Affairs where he championed the Space Shuttle. Before that, he was Director of Policy and Plans for the Office of Space Flight. For his contribution to the agency, he was awarded NASA's Exceptional Service medal and two Group Achievement awards.

Prior to NASA, Finn held several staff positions on Capitol Hill, including Senior Counsel for Energy, Science, and Space at the U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget. He was Staff Consultant to the U.S. House of Representatives' Select Committee on Committees, and he began his Hill career in 1966 as Legislative Assistant to Senator Joseph D. Tydings, a Democrat from Maryland.

Finn also was an adjunct professor of political science in Washington, DC. He taught graduate-level courses on Congress, the Presidency, lobbying, and the

federal budget at American, Catholic, and George Washington Universities.

Since 1975, he was a member of the American Political Science Association. Finn was also an Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. For seven years, he served on the Board of Trustees at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, MD.

Terence Finn received a B.A. from Williams College in 1964 and, in 1965, an M.A. from the University of Sussex in Great Britain. He held a Ph. D. in American Government from Georgetown University.

Finn authored four books -- two novels, and two historical accounts: "The Best of Times," about an American P-47 pilot in England during 1943; "To Begin Again," about a college professor recalled to the Air Force in 1951; and "When Europe Went Mad," a compact summary of the First World War. Notably, in early 2014, Penguin published Finn's book "America at War: Concise Histories of U.S. Military Conflicts From Lexington to Afghanistan." Finn enjoyed selling these works at regional air shows.

After retiring from NASA, Finn and his wife, Joyce, moved to Maryland's Eastern Shore, to a house on a bluff overlooking Chesapeake Bay with Baltimore in the distance. While there he served as Vice President of the Chester River Association, Vice President of the Tolchester Community Association, and as a board member of The Foundation for the Kent County Public Library. He taught a course in political science at Washington College and created several illustrated lecture courses for its Academy of Life Long Learning in which his longstanding passion for military history was the centerpiece.

Finn was an active member of the Tolchester, Chestertown, and Rock Hall communities. A favorite daily destination was a local coffee shop -- Java Rock

-- where he met and engaged in animated conversations with good friends.

For more than fifteen years, Terry and his brother, John, made annual trips to see games in famous baseball parks. Twice Finn took a cadre of close friends to New York Yankees Fantasy Baseball Camp. An avid traveler, Finn dazzled friends and family with his off-the-cuff history lessons while on trips to places like Red Square, Moscow, and Omaha Beach, Normandy. When not reading a history book, The Washington Post, or The Wall Street Journal, Finn was thinking about or watching his beloved Washington Redskins or a New York Yankees game. He was curious, kind, intellectual and a voracious reader and learner. Finn was a listener and a natural teacher. His family and friendships were central in his life.

Terence Finn is survived by his wife of 19 years, Joyce Purcell; his sons, Kevin and Tim; his daughter-in-law, Jaralyn; stepson, Daniel Schneider; his brother, John and sister-in-law, Marianne; and four much-loved housecats. Also surviving Finn are extended family from his first marriage to the late Leslie Kohn of Baltimore, MD.

A memorial service is planned for August, date to be decided, but please contact Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home at (410) 778-0055 for details. The Finn/Purcells are compiling a small booklet of stories and anecdotes, and invite family, friends, and co-workers to contribute. Please e-mail your text to RememberTerry@yahoo.com by July 15th.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made to The Foundation for Kent County Public Library Inc., PO Box 24, Chestertown, MD 21620; or the Humane Society of Kent County, 10720 Augustine Herman Highway, Chestertown, MD, 21620.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG **10**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Washington College's Gibson Center for the Arts, Decker Theater
MD 21620

Tribute Wall



“ *Terence Thomas Finn*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Terence Thomas Finn*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Terence Thomas Finn*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM