

*The Board of Directors of the Aerospace Legacy Foundation (ALF) would like to announce the passing of Edmond John Dowd. Mr. Dowd, a former Director of ALF and one of its founders, is beloved by all who remember a true friend and an incredible person. Our warmest thoughts and sympathy go out to his wife Charlie and their extended family throughout the world. Ed will live in our hearts forever.*

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## Edmond John Dowd (Ed) (11/22/21 – 2/24/11)



It is with our deepest regret that we have to inform you that Ed Dowd passed away last Thursday morning.

Ed was a remarkable man, who led a very full life. He was born in New York and moved to the west coast as a child. He graduated from Huntington Park High School in California with honours, then continued his education at USC, UCLA, Cal State University L.A. and ESADE (Spain).

Ed served in the Navy from the age of 19 aboard an attack cargo vessel, the USS Alchiba. The Alchiba operated in the Asiatic Pacific Theatre and was one of the first relief vessels to reach Pearl Harbour after the attack. It carried troops and cargo to Guadalcanal in 1942 and in other pacific locations including the Solomon Islands, Tonga Islands, American Samoa and New Hebrides.

After the war Ed married Jeanne and they were both involved in scuba diving when it was in its infancy. They wrote articles for Skin Diver Magazine at a time when divers were making their own equipment. Ed and Jeanne had a son, Mike, who they unfortunately lost in an auto accident when he was only 17. In memory of Mike they established a perpetual scholarship at UCLA.

After the end of the war Ed began what was to become a very long career in insurance. In 1946 he joined the Fireman's Fund Insurance Co in Los Angeles. Here he gained broad experience in marine survey and salvage. His duties included cover and claims for fishing boats working off Southern California and the Baja Peninsula. This was a dangerous occupation and his life was threatened a number of times.

In 1954 Ed joined the American International Group where he rose to become Manager for Southern California. In 1959 he was Domestic Manager, Sayre & Toso in Los Angeles. In 1967 he joined Johnson & Higgins (one of the world's largest brokerage firms until it merged with Marsh McLennan in 1987) as Vice President and Manager of their International Department and after many years in Asia went on to become President of the company.

Wherever Ed went he joined in with local people and activities. He was in Singapore for 14 years and while there he owned a junk which he and Jeanne enjoyed on the weekends, but he didn't talk about it much because it sank. His experience as a marine underwriter didn't seem to help.

After Ed left Johnson & Higgins, the company hired Ed and Jeanne to conduct legal quality control audits at 29 of their international offices. Ed and Jeanne finished assignment and then travelled throughout the Far East, South America, the Middle East, Europe, New Zealand and finally Australia. In Australia he helped establish a self insurance scheme for the New South Wales (NSW) Government. The Scheme, that he had a large part in establishing, was unequalled by any other insurance arrangement in the world.

Ed had many talents. When the self insurance scheme was launched he filmed and edited a video introduction to the scheme that included interviews with the NSW Treasurer and other officials. He even had his friends from the Police Air Arm take him in the police helicopter to film Sydney Harbour Bridge and other landmarks that were covered by the scheme and used that footage in the opening.

Ed worked for the NSW Scheme for 12 years and during that time fought hard to keep it simple and focussed on the basic principles that he helped establish. During those years he was involved in a wide variety of activities ranging from Formula 1 Racing to fine arts coverage for visiting world masters' exhibitions at the Art Gallery of NSW.

In his last year with the Scheme he was instrumental in bringing together all of the bodies involved in the Sydney Olympics. Getting agreement from a huge number of parties, all with their own interests required someone with the Wisdom of Solomon. Ed was the right man for the task.

Ed had an ability to quickly earn the respect of the people he met. He was active in the communities of all the countries that he worked and lived in and has extended families all over the world. He enriched the lives of all of those around him with his passion for life and his no nonsense approach. He liked to tell everyone that he was just a miserable old goat (MOG) but of course he was anything but miserable and certainly not an old goat. His only goat-like qualities were that he was stubborn and if something couldn't be done one way, he'd work on it until he found a way. He was also not afraid to lock horns with anyone who got in his way. He certainly had a strong character and in that way he was, at times, as stubborn as an old goat.

While he was in Australia his community involvement included helping seriously disabled people to enjoy the exhilaration of sailing on Sydney Harbour. At the other extreme he also helped kids who were involved in painting graffiti to channel their skill in more productive ways. Ed made many friends in Australia and added to his global family. He and Jeanne had previously welcomed, to their US home, several foreign exchange students. Anders and his sister Eva from Sweden are foundation members of Ed's extended global family.

By the end of his career Ed had worked in 98 countries and had experience that was unsurpassed in the insurance industry. With his vast worldwide experience, he was a proud member of the Circumnavigators' Club, a club devoted to bringing together those men and women who had gone around the world.

Ed returned to California in July 2000, not to retire, but to start a new phase of his life. Jeanne had passed away in 1999 and he was lonely and somewhat amazed that other people his age seemed to be settling back in easy chairs waiting for their time to end. To him this was a waste and he had no intention of taking that option. He purchased a motor home with the intention of travelling with friends. He also took over the involvement that he and Jeanne had started in the Aerospace Legacy Foundation to preserve the historic North American Rockwell Boeing Space Division site in Downey, California (home of the Apollo and Space Shuttle).

Early in 2001, a lady named Charlotte Glenn (or Charlie as she is affectionately known) rang the Aerospace Legacy Foundation to ask where she could donate some space memorabilia. The advice given to her was to contact Ed Dowd, and she realised that he was the same Ed Dowd that she had known 40 years ago. That chance encounter started a new chapter in the lives of both Charlie and Ed. It wasn't long before he proposed to her. Charlie wanted an appropriate courtship first, but Ed in his usual no nonsense approach said that at his age he didn't have time for that. He flew in all of Charlie's family and had a beautiful wedding at the Wayfarers Chapel overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Then he took Charlie on a honeymoon around the world visiting the global families.

Ed was privileged to share almost 10 years with Charlie and to become a part of her family. This included two children, six grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

*He loved driving and loved his motor home and Charlie and he enjoyed many trips together. Ed was continually looking for new things to do and see. He just didn't want to sit still.*

*He filled his life with more experiences than the average person can imagine. Along the way he added a great deal to the lives of all who knew him and particularly to his extended family who loved him dearly.*

**A Celebration of Life Memorial Service will be held at Lithonia First Baptist Church 6616 Hillandale Drive Lithonia, GA 30058 Phone # (770) 482-8703 on Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, at 3 p.m.**

In lieu of flowers, if you wish, please send a contribution to the American Lung Association.

With much love,

Charlotte (Charlie) Dowd and family

Jeanne and Ed Dowd were much more than two of the finest people I have known. They were the kind of friends who made your life better because you knew them. The Aerospace Legacy Foundation and the Columbia Memorial Space Center would not be here if not for the vision and efforts of Jeanne and Ed. It takes many people to accomplish these kinds of dreams but the visionaries can see them through and pass that legacy on to others. We have seen their vision and will continue to build on it so that others can become part of it as well.

**We have created a special memorial website for Ed and his memory. Please visit it at:**

<http://memorialwebsites.legacy.com/eddowd/Homepage.aspx> and share your special thoughts and memories.

**Thank You Ed for all you have shared with us. Jerry Blackburn**

“Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms... “John 14