



Celebrating the Extraordinary Life of

R. ROBERT RUSSELL

2.17.1938 ~ 8.24.2023

*Our Father, Grandfather, Brother,
Uncle, Friend, Colleague, Mentor,
& Life Partner*

Saturday, January 6, 2024

*Huntington Beach Senior Center
in Central Park*



"Horace" ~ Robert's favorite tree in Central Park

Program for the Afternoon

Please enjoy some wine and champagne — from Robert's cellar — and a buffet lunch, with music organized by Denise Doiron and a slideshow curated by Nathalie Russell and family

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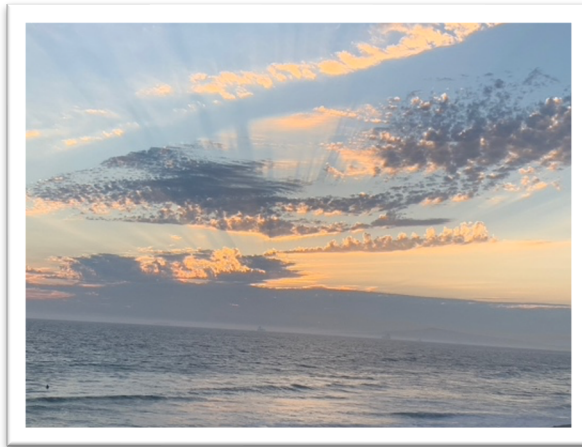
Lunch will be followed by brief remarks from some who knew him best ~

- Lifelong Friends **Art Hansen** and **Bill Schworm**
- UCR Colleague and Friend **Jang-Ting Guo**
- Sister **Jean Laird**
- Granddaughters
Josie Adgate
Syrah Russell Lemos
Carleigh Cordova
Alyssa Russell
Jennifer Adgate
- Stepson **Steve Adgate**
- Son **Jeff Russell**
- Life Partner **Kathleen Montgomery**

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Please sign our guest book and feel free to take a copy of Robert's memoir of his growing up years, *My Father's Face*, and his chronicles of desert racing days, *Dirt-Bike Diaries*.

R. Robert Russell of Huntington Beach CA died peacefully at his home on Thursday, August 24, 2023. He was 85.



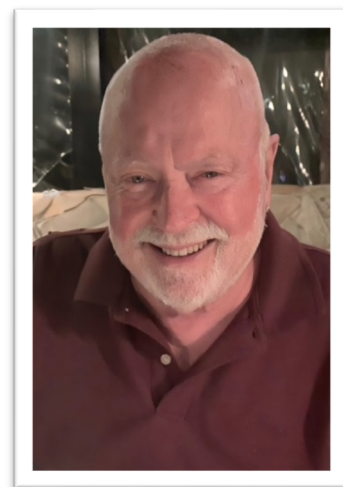
Huntington Beach sunset

Robert was born in Rock Springs WY and spent his early years in Wyoming, Oregon, and California. He graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and earned a PhD in economics at Harvard University.

Following his PhD, Robert had an illustrious career as a professional economist within academia, government, and policy centers, with major contributions in theoretical, applied, and policy research. He held academic appointments at UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego, New York University; and in 1986, he joined the faculty at UC Riverside as University of California President's Chair and Professor of Economics. He retired from UCR as Distinguished Professor of Economics in 2010 and continued as a Professor of the Graduate Division post-retirement.

In addition to his academic appointments, Robert served in two Presidential administrations: on the professional staff of the Johnson Administration's Council of Economic Advisers and as Director of President Carter's Council on Wage and Price Stability. He was Guest Scholar with the Brookings Institution in Washington DC and served as Director of the C.V. Starr Center for Applied Economics during his appointment at New York University.

Robert was a creative, rigorous, and lucid thinker with broad intelligence, unlimited persistence, and enormous dedication to issues that really matter. He was a brilliant expositor with a cogent and engaging style. His many important research papers, as well as his outstanding teaching career, reflect these talents. Robert was invited frequently as a keynote speaker for international conferences and was selected as the Faculty Research Lecturer in 2007, the highest research honor at UCR. He leaves a legacy of many graduate students whom he advised and encouraged; in recognition of this, he received the UCR Dissertation Advisor/Mentoring Award in 2009. He was elected to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1999.



Robert's 85th birthday, Feb 2023

These professional accomplishments do not begin to tell the full story of Robert Russell. He loved adventure and lived life on his own terms. He had a severe aversion to wearing long pants. His disdain for inertia led him to participate in many sports and outdoor activities, including basketball, beach volleyball, running, tennis, hiking, and camping. In the 1970s he was ranked number 11 in the Expert class of dirt-bike racing in District 37 in the Mojave Desert, riding a 400cc Husqvarna. Later in life, bicycle riding became his passion, taking 30-mile rides even into his 80s.

He savored every moment with his family. He was never happier than when spending time with them, celebrating milestones, taking trips together, camping in the desert, eating at fine restaurants and little local dives, picking blue crabs in the backyard, and – best of all – simply sitting around the dining table enjoying spirited conversations.

His granddaughters recognized and valued his kindness and fun-loving character, sometimes proudly referring to him as their bad-ass Grandpa when he would let them drive his Jeep in the desert at age 8. He showed them how to embrace life with gusto, commitment, and compassion. They loved him dearly, and they never doubted his love for them.

Robert and his wife Kathleen relished opportunities to travel. Their favorite destinations were France and Australia, and their trips were even more memorable when friends and family came along.

Over the years, countless visitors were welcomed into his and Kathleen's home, where dinners were legendary. He was an excellent cook and sommelier, digging into his downstairs closet-cum-wine cellar for the perfect bottle. He spiced his cooking with a pinch of cayenne "because it gives the dish a kick without changing its fundamental flavors."

Robert is survived by his partner in life of 42 years, his wife Kathleen Montgomery; two sons and their wives, Jeffrey and Nathalie Russell and Kevin and Kay Russell; two stepsons and their wives, Mike and Tammy Adgate and Steve and Carla Adgate; six granddaughters Syrah, Alyssa, Josie, Rebecca, Jennifer, and Carleigh; his sister Jean Laird; half-siblings Gary Russell and Kathy McDaniel; and a large and cherished extended family of nieces, nephews, and in-laws. His first wife, Judy Honey, the mother of his sons, died in 2019.

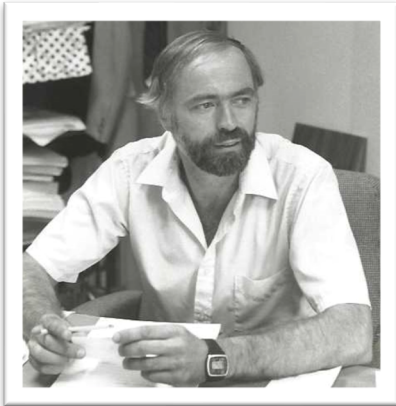
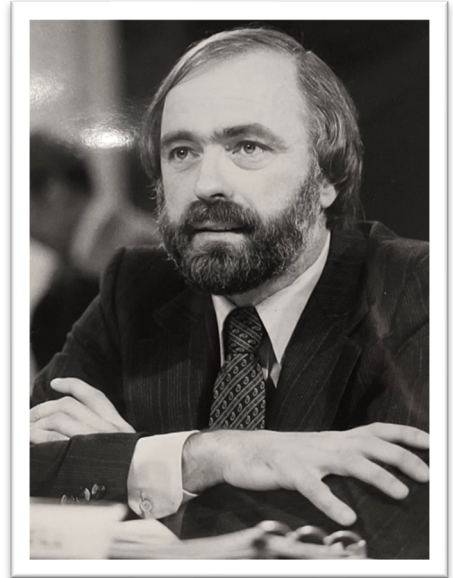
He also leaves behind a slew of lifelong friends, colleagues, and graduate students around the world, who appreciated his good humor and *joie de vivre* as well as his intellect, incisive opinions, sharp wit, and most of all his kindness and integrity.



Huntington Beach ~ Bolsa Chica Bird Sanctuary

Robert as a Colleague

“Bob was something special ...the energy, the determination, the commitment to doing what was right rather than convenient set the tone for all those at CWPS.” Sally Katzen, General Counsel at the Council on Wage and Price Stability



“It is difficult to describe how fortunate the economics department has been to have a solid foundation under his leadership. I also greatly benefited from interacting and communicating with him on almost everything. He was truly the founder of the new and modern economics department through his convictions, unlimited persistence, and enormous dedication. Along with all these, he was highly professional with deep intellectual ideas, research work, and encouraging others. Above all, he was one of the kindest and nicest humans.” UCR Professor Aman Ullah

“Robert taught us that an academician builds his/her reputation one paper at the time and that there should not be any room for compromising our intellectual values.”
UCR Professor Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera

“Bob’s passing is a huge loss to all who knew him personally. Not only was he an outstanding scholar and teacher, but he was also exceptionally generous and a person of absolute integrity.”
UCR Professor Prasanta Pattanaik



“Bob was a great mentor...patient, kind, and always willing to listen and to talk things over. I couldn’t have hoped for a better colleague or friend.” Former UCR Professor Wei Li

“We are honored to count him among the most renowned of our community.”
UCR Academic Senate Chair Sang-Hee Lee.

Robert as a Professor and Mentor

“Professor Russell will always be in my thoughts for his immense contribution throughout my graduate life and way beyond.” Aditi Bhattacharyya

“I’d like to dedicate this [UCSD Teaching Award] to my PhD advisor, Bob Russell, who passed away in August. I owe him everything.” Steve Levkoff

“I remember his lectures vividly; they were mesmerizing. We were quite shocked when he told us in the first lecture about his open-door policy for graduate students and encouraged us to contact him via email at any time with queries. But not only that, many of us never had a Professor who would turn up to the lecture in shorts.” Indranil Dutta

“He was an awesome teacher.” Sushama Murty

“I would be foolish to think I could simply write down what he meant to me as his former student and co-author, not to mention his impact on my academic career (and that of my own students). I do possess the ability to say that I will miss the conversations about life, academia, and basketball, many of which over an adult beverage.” Daniel Henderson

“I remember his Econ 200 micro class – if anyone looked at the whiteboard they would have thought that we were in a math-geometry class; he drew hyperplanes so beautifully and made math look like design. Professor Russell embodied humility and compassion.” Venoo Kakar



“Professor Russell had a tremendous impact on my life. After many years, I realized how rare it is for faculty to set aside time from their busy schedules to help students pursue dreams they never could imagine. Professor Russell was one of less than a handful of people who have transformed how I see the world. I am eternally grateful for all he has done for me.”

Gerald Daniels

“I will always remember him very gratefully for the immense confidence he showed in me and the encouragement he provided me over the course of my PhD. His loss will be felt very

deeply by all the students he has encouraged and inspired over the many decades.” Gurleen Popli

“I think I speak for everybody in my UCR grad school cohort when I say that we will cherish Bob’s memory for as long as we ourselves live.” Indraneel Dasgupta

Robert's Joie de Vivre

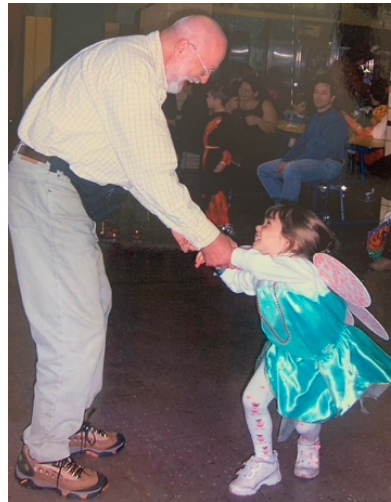
Part of Kathleen's Tribute on his 80th Birthday ~

Although he has visited incredible museums and magnificent cathedrals around the world, it's not just the famous sights Robert's been after. He's needed adventure! So, he's gone snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef and swum under the Fantasy Island waterfall on Kauai. He's cruised along the Norwegian fjords above the Arctic Circle, and he's stood on the cliff edge of Kangaroo Island with nothing but the Southern Ocean between him and Antarctica.

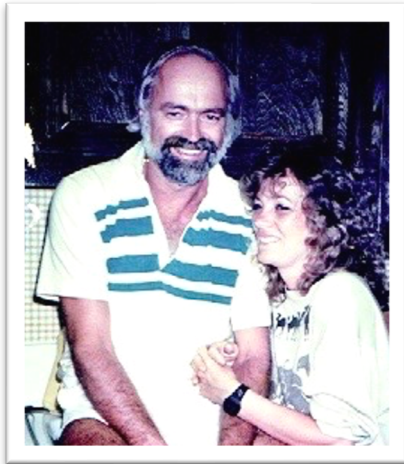
He's gone paragliding in New Zealand and zip-lining on Catalina. He's paced off the athletic field at the first Olympic stadium in Greece and hiked around the Aboriginal sacred rock known as Uluru. He's walked among the prehistoric monuments of Stonehenge and ancient Buddhist temples outside Bangkok. And then he's trekked across ground younger than he is, through a still-flowing lava field on Hawaii's Big Island.

And everywhere, from around the world and here at home, he has made wining and dining memories with family and friends.









And did you get what you wanted from this life,
even so?
I did.

And what did you want?
*To call myself beloved,
to feel myself beloved on the earth.*

"Late Fragment" by Raymond Carver
From *A New Path to the Waterfall*, Atlantic Monthly Press, 1989

Robert's Journey to Ithaca

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*Robert's student Javier Santiago Ortiz gave him the poem **Ithaca** on his retirement in 2010. Javier offered more comments on learning of his death in August 2023.*

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I always thought of him as a trailblazer and a man on the move. He had in his eyes that endless gaze of someone used to long roads, wide landscapes, and steep climbs.

He had the calm of someone who enjoyed every step along the way. He indeed reached many peaks, but his spirit seemed always eager (and restless) to find new hills to climb.

He had the gentleness of someone who could learn abundantly from life. I am so sure that on wins and losses, on good and bad moments, he just kept learning and he just kept listening.

He was an outstanding scholar and a fantastic professor who was able to convey the issues that were at the center of his professional activities. And although I will always be grateful for everything I learned from him in microeconomics, I am even more grateful for what he taught with his example, his attentive conversation, and his kindness.

I could see him swirling that glass of wine, looking upwards and having that half-hidden smile he used to have when starting to enjoy anything, and as saying to life: "I can see, now, in the distance, the gates of Ithaca."

I cannot see his death as a departure, but as a continuation of the amazing journey of his life. Now, he is, certainly, traversing other landscapes and climbing other mountains.

May our paths cross again, to see him wearing his shorts, to see his shining eyes, to listen to his laugh and of course, to see him walking, always walking, chasing the perfect sunset and the perfect sky.



Ithaca

When you leave for Ithaca,
May your journey be long
And full of adventures and knowledge.
Do not be afraid of Laestrigones, Cyclopes
Or furious Poseidon;
You won't come across them on your way
If you don't carry them in your soul,
If your soul does not put them in front of your steps.

I hope your road is long.
May there be many a summer morning,
And may ports for the first time seen
Bring you great joy.
May you stop at Phoenician marts,
To purchase there the best of wares,
Mother-of-pearl and coral, amber, ebony,
Hedonic perfumes of all sorts;
May you go to various Egyptian towns
And learn from a people with so much to teach.

Don't lose sight of Ithaca,
For that's your destination.
But take your time;
Better that the journey lasts many a year
And that your boat only drops anchor on the island
When you have grown rich
With what you learned on the way.

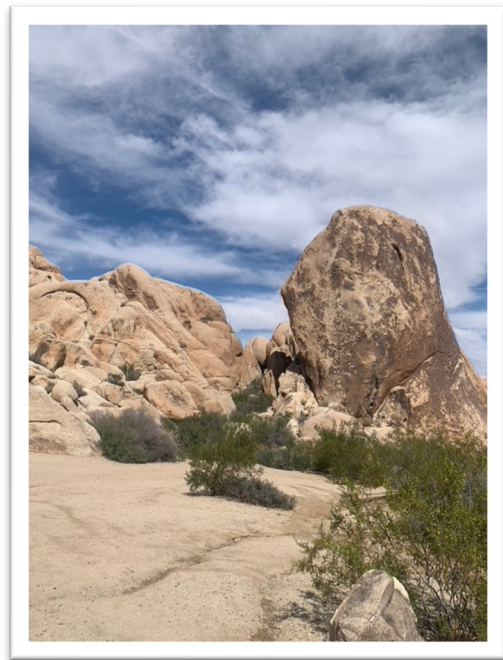
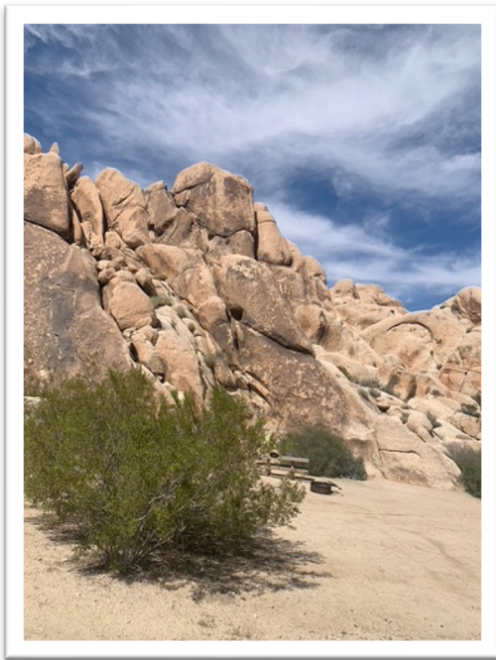
Don't expect Ithaca to give you many riches.
Ithaca has already given you a fine voyage;
Without Ithaca you would never have parted.
Ithaca gave you everything and can give you no more.

If in the end you think that Ithaca is poor,
Don't think that she has cheated you.
Because you have grown wise and lived an intense life,
And that's the meaning of Ithaca.

By Konstantinos P. Kavafis



Joshua Tree National Park



Indian Cove

