



Robert G. Frasher, Jr.

July 9, 1938 - December 30, 2022

Robert "Bob" G. Frasher Jr., husband, father, and metallurgist, lived a life that reflected working-class mobility, struggle, and success in a transformative period in US history. Bob was the eldest child of Robert Sr. and Virginia "Jenny" Klis, born on July 9, 1938 in North Tonawanda, a suburb of Buffalo, NY.

His natural abilities in mathematics, chemistry, and analytical thinking opened social and professional opportunities throughout his lifetime. He worked at the chem lab at Tonawanda Iron after graduating high school, developing processes and formulas that saved the company millions, quickly rising to management as a Unit Foreman. It was a pattern of accomplishment that he repeated throughout his career. Sensing the imminent collapse of steel in Buffalo, he moved to Ohio. At Youngstown Sheet and Tube (YST) he penned research on coke mixes that produced higher iron yields and blast furnace efficiencies, introduced bi-product tar to reduce costs, and rebuilt stoves and askanias leading to higher quality steel production. Before Black Monday, he jumped to Eljer Plumbingware where he initiated incentive wage plans, introduced cost controls to systems, and implemented OSHA standards. At the LTV Steel Warren Works, he was a Foreman on the coke ovens. He retired from Lincoln Electric, after developing stronger welding powders. He was initially intimidated- "They want me to teach PhDs; what can I show them?" His daughter Michelle assured him that PhDs don't know everything,

and he was there for a reason.

Between these successes were bouts of unemployment, lesser jobs taken to survive, depression, despair, and hope. Robert never saw himself as a victim of progress, rather that the industry needed to evolve and specialize with investments in technology. Regardless of the outcomes, steel opened his world.

In his early days, Bob indulged in custom suits to fit his slim 6' 2" frame, fast cars, and libations with a rowdy circle of friends. He traveled, especially enjoying San Francisco, California and Las Vegas, where he saw the Rat Pack at the Sands, and the Minsky's Follies at the Dunes. He served in the National Guard as a Tank Commander. He was a great dancer, poker player, and friend to musicians who frequented Buffalo. Local adventures often included his brother Rich, who had a penchant for bar fights on the Oliver Street circuit, which legend claims as having the most bars per mile of any street in the US at the time. He frequented most of them and tended bar at Frank and Lotti's "Our Inn".

He met his wife, Mary Ann, at Rich's wedding shower, who accurately judged him obnoxious and hung over. Bob mother coerced them into their first date. A week later, Bob proposed to Mary telling her "You are elegant and smart and I love you. I'm not asking again." She said "Yes" with a warning that she would accept nothing but respect during their marriage. Two years later, at a lavish 500-person wedding, Bob's friend took bets on how long it would last. They were married 55 years.

Bob was an ambitious but meticulously planned risk taker. Mary's cautious, caring, but tenacious temperament made her complementary partner. The latter quality not always acknowledged by Bob who would frequently test her patience, sometimes with legendary consequences. Dressed in a suit on his

way to a meeting, he insisted on having the last word in an argument while Mary watered flowers outside. Astonished and speechless, with Mary's uncontrollable giggling ringing in joyous song, she drenched him head to toe. She kept him in line and on his toes. He was devoted to her.

A daughter, Michelle, became the third member of that team four years into marriage. Bob's relationship with Michelle was complicated, but strong. As with many fathers of daughters, he worried about the challenges she would encounter and strove to prepare her mentally for it, sometimes to an antagonistic fault. Through the noise there was support and admiration. She learned resilience from the family's experiences with unemployment and pulled her weight, even working at LTV. He made sure she could take advantage of opportunities as they arose. He drained a retirement IRA during an episode of unemployment so she could study abroad. "Make it work. We are proud of you and this is important." She did. When she earned her PhD, it was a family achievement and Bob would brag about her accomplishments to anyone within earshot.

He was colorblind, which lent to fashion hilarity. He liked blue. He drank Genesee Cream Ale, PBR, and on special occasions, Michelob. He loved wine from the Saint-Emilion region of France. He looked forward to family vacations to Myrtle Beach and golfing. He watched cheesy 1950s horror movies hosted by a man in a superhero costume who made sculptures out of head cheese. He insisted the family attend the Bolshoi ballet after the fall of the Soviet empire. He was a Mason. He was bad at emotions, was prone to depression, but gravitated to the sappiest Hallmark card in the store and wrote letters that went on for pages expressing apologies and love. He never ended a phone call or a goodbye without saying "I love you". He was faithful to the Buffalo Bills. His nickname at work was Buffalo Bob. He gave to charity, even when the family couldn't afford it. He stood up against corruption and injustice

in the workplace sometimes jeopardizing his own livelihood. He had excellent taste in women's jewelry.

Robert's decline with Alzheimers, dementia, kidney disease and other health issues lasted 15 years. He passed away peacefully with his family by his side on 30 December 2022. He was 84. He is survived by his wife Mary, his daughter Michelle, and his son-in-law Marc. He was preceded by his brothers Richard and Walter.

He will be buried on 5 January 2023 at Valley Forge Memorial Gardens, near the national park where he camped as a boy, smartly dressed in a suit and a pressed handkerchief, and tucked in to rest with his Buffalo Bills blanket keeping him warm.

The family requests that family and friends honor Robert's memory by donating to the Alzheimer's Foundation, www.alz.org, the National Kidney Foundation, www.kidney.org, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, www.stjude.org, or a charity of their choice in lieu of flowers.

Cemetery Details

Valley Forge Memorial Gardens

352 S. Gulph Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406