



Sheldon R. Smith

January 4, 2019

Sheldon Ruff Smith passed away on Jan. 4, 2019 after 20 years fighting Parkinson's disease.

Sheldon was 80 years old and is survived by his wife, Lois Hoffmeister Smith; children Scott Smith, James Smith and Kathleen Smith; three adult grandchildren Renee Smith, Elayne Lowe and James McGrath; and his sister and brother-in-law Mary-Alice and Richard Jafolla.

Those who knew him remember Sheldon as gentle and approachable, a little mischievous and fun-loving. He always made friends wherever he went, never lost his sense of humor, and sometimes went adventuring-whether through books or travels.

Sheldon and Lois were married for 56 years. They met in Nutley, New Jersey after Sheldon's parents invited Lois over for a Sunday dinner following church. He asked her out the next day. Lois and Sheldon shared a deep love for each other, and always held hands no matter how wrinkled they got.

"I was blessed with a good man-kind, considerate, loving and gentle," Lois said.

Sheldon always took care of his family first and was an example of unconditional love. Sheldon was encouraging and supportive of his children and enjoyed sharing in their activities from model trains to fishing to father-daughter dances. He was an involved volunteer and supporter of the church, scouting and Little League. He enjoyed being a dad and he also enjoyed his own interests.

Throughout his life, Sheldon discovered a love for Sherlock Holmes, pipes, Jesse James history and Scotch, particularly Glenfiddich on special occasions and family gatherings. He relished traveling to remote locations in the U.S. to explore famous Jesse James hideouts and historical locations related to the bandit. Sheldon savored researching and studying the James-Younger Gang and discovering truth versus fiction. Each of his family remembers him relaxing in the garden and puffing on his pipe in the evenings.

Sheldon was born in Belleville, New Jersey. He graduated from Muhlenberg College, in Pennsylvania and later earned a master's from Nova in Florida. He spent many years as a businessman and later taught English in public schools in Florida and South Carolina. He was very patient with his students and was well-liked by them.

From his big heart to his methodical nature, Sheldon was a man of faith and will be remembered for the joy he spread. But most importantly, to those who loved him, Sheldon will remain in their hearts through the words he crafted.

I learned to mix kindness with my strength. And you know something, it worked. I was happy and content on one hand, while on the other hand I had my self-respect. Great combination. Still is.

--Sheldon Smith, from a collection of short stories he wrote in 1993

Sheldon was always hopeful that a cure for Parkinson's would be developed. Memorial contributions can be sent to the Parkinson's Foundation in memory of Sheldon. Tribute gifts can be made on the Foundation's website, <https://bit.ly/2Fbn9ws> . There will be no formal service.

Tribute Wall



“ Sheldon R. Smith

November 08, 2022 at 07:37 PM



“ I love you, think of you, and consult my memory of you for wisdom every day. You are in every talk I have with my son William "Bill" Scout McGrath and each giggle I share with my daughter Charlotte "Charlie" Finch McGrath. You are strewn throughout the laughs over any game of chess I've ever played and the twinkle in my eye when I'm getting into mischief. You were the most important male role model I had growing up and far better than any Grandson could have a right to ask for. Your great grand children are raised on tidbits of your wisdom and stories of your enthusiasm for knowledge. You'd be so proud of them. I'm so sorry it took so long to finally call. I will always be working to grow into the example you were and, in my heart, the monolith you will forever be. When I close my eyes, I can still smell your sweet pipe tobacco over the aromatic freshly cut grass and the pleasingly gentle exhaust notes of our ride on mower adventures from my childhood. The detergent from your yard work shirt blending with the smell of your tar shampoo in what was a portion of what made up the best hugs any boy ever got. Your plastic pocket protectors filled with fun colored pens and haircuts at Griff's Will never leave me. One day, when I'm giving my own grandchildren their own ride-on mower adventures, I'll be sure to take a moment to reflect on the wondrous fun we shared together and the long reaching import that it had on my life and the lives of those I've known. And when my own time on this magnificent ride is over, I look forward to catching up with you and getting what I'm sure will be the inside scoop you have from your good friends with the James Younger gang in the big saloon in the sky over some glasses of single malt.

Jay McGrath III - January 01, 2020 at 12:00 AM