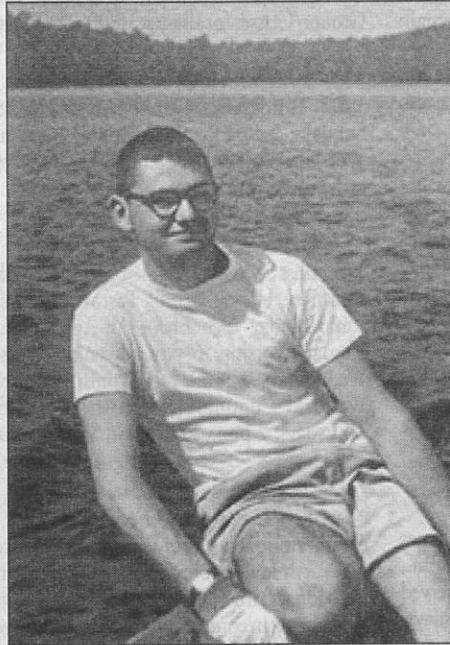


Richard F. Weeks 64-R
7-14-2022



Richard F. Weeks died in Grinnell, Iowa, July 11, 2022. He was born June 1, 1932, in Schenectady, N.Y., where he graduated from Nott Terrace High School in 1950. He earned a B.A. in Physics from Princeton University in 1954 and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Optics from the University of Rochester Institute of Optics in 1959.

During a long career he contributed to the Apollo space program and worked with early lasers. At Polaroid Corporation, he headed the team that designed the optics for the iconic Polaroid SX-70, the world's first folding single-lens reflex camera.

For this, he and a colleague earned the Richardson Medal from the Optical Society of America, of which he was a fellow, for distinguished contribution to applied optics in 1980. Later, NASA asked him to chair a blue-ribbon panel of scientists and engineers charged with overseeing the metrology in fabricating the optics of the Chandra x-ray observatory.

Richard was curious, independent, ingenious, and relentlessly enthusiastic—"all sail and no anchor" according to his high school yearbook. He was a talented inventor, photographer, woodworker, boat builder, house restorer, and self-taught jack of many trades.

The three great loves of his life were the former Elizabeth "Betty" Gordon, sailing, and music. The two met in high school, had their first date in a sailboat, married in 1954, and were inseparable at sea and ashore. They sailed the coast of Maine in a series of boats until coming to Iowa to live near family in 2008.

Richard is survived by wife Betty, of Des Moines, Iowa; son Dan (Randi) of Des Moines, Iowa; son Geoff (Karen) of Lyman, Iowa; daughter Liz (Michael) Hazelmyer of Virginia Beach, Virginia; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Due to Covid, there will be no public service.