



## Harley Duncan Kelley

November 4, 1933 - December 10, 2024

Harley Duncan Kelley, aged 91, passed away peacefully on December 10th, 2024 at his home in Bend, Oregon. Harley was born on November 4, 1933 to Viola and Harland Kelley in Ontario, Oregon, eldest of four boys. He went to Pacific University and followed that by attending the University of Oregon Medical School where he graduated in 1959. He began an internship program in Los Angeles County and a residency in Portland where he did three years of general surgery before being drafted into the U.S. Military as a Captain. At this time, Harley went on a double date with a friend and was introduced to the love of his life, Carole Colby. She was an intelligent, kind, and vibrant woman. They had four children together. Harley was sent to Vietnam, leaving Carole home with three young children: Wesley, Colleen, Claire, and one on the way. He landed on October 25, 1967, the day his last child, Walter, was born. Harley spent a year in Vung Tau during the Tet Offensive of '68 and then in Danang where he joined the busiest

of three surgical teams doing 24-hour rotations performing surgeries daily on incoming casualties. After his tour, Harley returned to the United States where he was assigned to Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey. During this year, Harley's wife developed cancer. In August their third child, Claire, tragically passed away at six years old in a car accident. Shortly after, the devastating understanding that Carole was losing her battle with cancer became evident, and she passed away on February 20, 1970. She was 34 years old. After leaving the Army, Harley returned to private practice in Portland, Oregon, continuing with general surgery for the next 25 years. He met and married Susan, who was a kind and dedicated stepmother to his kids. Sadly, Susan passed away at age 36 from cancer. Later, he met a nurse named Candy, and Harley married once again. In 1989, Harley decided he'd like to travel some more while still being able to do surgery so he returned to active duty. He chose Landstuhl, Germany, which had a 400 bed hospital. During this tour he explored all of Europe. After Germany, he was sent to the Persian Gulf War, where he became Chief of Surgery at a combat support hospital. He often took eight mile walks in the desert with other doctors and they referred to the hike as the "Kelley Death March!" He returned home and ended up at Ft. Meade, Maryland, before going to Seoul, Korea. He accepted this assignment because he knew it would

allow him another opportunity to travel through Asia. He spent eight years in the Army Medical

Corps and entertained the idea of another assignment but the Army told him to, "Take a hike!"

because he was almost 62 years old. He retired as a Colonel.

After the military, Harley went to Burns, Oregon, where he took care of ranchers for five years.

Still seeking travel, he moved to New Zealand to do general surgery on both islands, an

experience he really enjoyed. In 2014, after his international travel, he settled down in Bend,

Oregon, doing locums covering surgeons as needed. He also proudly worked for Volunteers in

Medicine for 20 years performing minor surgeries for the underprivileged. He completed his final

surgery at age 90, setting a record for holding the longest medical license in state history of 61

years!

Harley will be remembered for his incredible dedication to service, family, and friends; and for

long walks around Hug Point, for frisbee golf with his son-in-law, Joe Reali (deceased), and for a

twinkling eye reflecting his quiet intelligence and wit. Most of all, for his love, kindness, and

support. It was important to Harley to maintain family and friendships. He often met for a

weekend of old stories and laughs, reunions, and annual elk hunting trips trudging through the

snow, well into his 80s. He made it to all seven continents pursuing his passion of travel. He will

always be dearly loved. We will miss his lama updates and delicious tacos! He was a fine

example of a soldier, gentleman, father, and friend.

Dr. Kelley is survived by his children: Wesley, Colleen, Walter, and his four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Laid to rest January 7, 2025, at Willamette National Cemetery, Portland, Oregon.

Memorial in Bend, Oregon, January 18, 2025, 3:00PM at First Presbyterian Church.

Celebration of Life, Portland, Oregon, TBD.

# Cemetery Details

## Willamette National Cemetery Office

11800 SE Mt Scott Blvd  
Happy Valley, OR 97086  
(503) 273-5250

# Previous Events

## Memorial

JAN 18. 3:00 PM (PT)

First Presbyterian Church of Bend  
230 NE 9th St, Bend, OR 97701  
Bend, OR 97701

# Tribute Wall



“ 17 files added to the album *Harley Kelley Album* ”



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**Niswonger Reynolds Funeral Home & Greenwood Cemetery** - December 24, 2024 at 12:48 PM