



Joseph C. Bragdon

May 21, 1916 - February 29, 2016

SHELBURNE FALLS - Joseph C. Bragdon, 99, of Shelburne Falls, MA died Monday at home surrounded by his wife, Doris, of 74 years, his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Joe was born in Glenshaw, Pennsylvania, May 21, 1916, the youngest of five children to Howard and Bessie (Gable) Bragdon. Joe's family moved to California in 1926, crossing the United States in a 1923 Nash pulling one of the country's first travel trailers, a great novelty at the time. Joe completed elementary school and went on to graduate from Hollywood High. In 1935, the family moved to Monterey where they opened a restaurant on Tyler Street in one of Monterey's historic adobes. This experience inspired Joe's life-long love of cooking. In 1937, he began working in the now world-renowned sardine canneries of Cannery Row. The same year he met Doris Barnard who had just graduated from Pacific Grove High School the previous year. Joe and Doris were married in Pacific Grove in 1941 and shortly thereafter Joe was drafted in the U.S. Army serving his entire tour of duty in California and Texas. After the war, Joe began attending Hartnell College in Salinas, California where he met his teacher, mentor, and friend, noted regionalist painter, Leon Amyx. At Amyx's insistence, Joe went on to earn a bachelor's degree in Art at San Jose State and a masters in Art from Stanford. Joe began teaching high school in Stockton, California and shortly after the birth of their third son, returned to Salinas to teach with Leon Amyx at Hartnell College. In the early sixties, while working to save the fragile Monterey Bay coastline from the imminent threat of

a major oil refinery, the Bragdons became friends with photographer, Ansel Adams who inspired Joe to pursue photography. Joe spent many hours photographing with Adams both in the High Sierra and along the California Coast. In 1971 and 1972, the Bragdons spent a year driving and camping in Europe, North Africa, and the Soviet Union. During this year, Joe was able to develop an intimacy with many great works of European and Middle Eastern art. He also made some of his most memorable photographs during this time. Joe retired after thirty years of teaching at Hartnell, but continued to pursue his love of drawing, painting, sculpture, photography and sailing. In 2012, the Bragdons moved to Shelburne Falls, MA to be near their son, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. In 2013, the Bragdons made the trip back to California where Joe had a major retrospective of his photography at the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas where both Joe and Doris had been volunteer docents for many years. In 2015, Joe was given special recognition from the US Congress and the California State Assembly for his years of service as a teacher and mentor to thousands of art students at Hartnell College. Also in 2015, Joe received the Boston Post Golden Cane as the oldest resident of the town of Shelburne. New England Funeral & Cremation Center, LLC 25 Mill Street, Springfield, MA has been entrusted with the arrangements. Visit www.nefcc.net We invite you to send a message of condolence to the Bragdon family at www.nefcc.net

Tribute Wall

CG

“ Dear Doris and Family,\r\nI felt so honored to have been able to get to know you. Joe was an extraordinary man and with you Doris raised an extraordinary family. God be with you all.\r\nMany Prayers and thoughts.\r\nSincerely,\r\nCarolyn Giard

Carolyn Giard - February 14, 2023 at 10:19 AM

DB

“ So sorry to hear about Joe, Doris. He was a great friend to many students and colleagues at Hartnell. \r\nHe will be missed!

Dan & Joan Bequette - February 14, 2023 at 10:19 AM

DA

“ My condolences to the family. I knew Joe from his time volunteering at the National Steinbeck Center with Doris. Joe loved to talk with our guests about the history of the county and Cannery Row, and guests loved them both. It was great to see them again when they came for Joe's photography exhibit. What a talented man! Love to the family.

Diane Arelano - February 14, 2023 at 10:19 AM

JV

“ I am so sorry to hear of Joe's passing. I was very fond of Joe and enjoyed getting to know him. A warm, kind and interesting man, he had a full life, with lots of love and purpose. My love and thoughts are with you all!\r\nJan

Jan Voorhis - February 14, 2023 at 10:19 AM

JP

“ *As I Join you in your sorrow of Joseph c. Brandon , my thoughts and prayers are with you. \"Hold on to your memories until the words of Isaiah 25;8 are fulfilled\"*

John L Presutti - February 14, 2023 at 10:19 AM