

OBITUARIES

GREENPORT

Lawrence M. Tuthill, 79, builder, civic leader

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Lawrence M. Tuthill of Greenport was one of those people on the East End who seemed to know everybody and was known by everyone, at least everyone who had anything to do with his business.

Tuthill, a dock builder and licensed engineer, died Friday. He was 79.

Even after he retired and sold his business, Tuthill stayed involved in the construction industry, signing off on house plans and advising town officials on issues like shoreline erosion.

"He never advertised. He didn't need to, and he didn't need the [extra] work," said his son, Lawrence Jr., the Southold

Town Democratic leader. "He never had a telephone number on his truck, and he never had a business phone. He had two crews, and he would say that's just too much."

Over the years he did work for Southold town, the federal government on Plum Island, and for a lot of private homeowners and local marinas on the North Fork and on Shelter Island.

When he wasn't working in his chosen field, he found time to be an active volunteer for the Greenport Fire Department.

Tuthill could trace his family's roots in Southold back to 1640, when the first settlers arrived.

His son recalled that when he was growing up, his father

seemed to be away at work for whole seasons of the year.

"He was a very hard worker. He was gone a good part of the spring and early summer," he said. "That was his busy time. He had to get docks done. He would promise they would be ready by Memorial Day, or if not, by the Fourth of July."

Tuthill was born in Greenport, and earned a degree in engineering at Norwich University in Vermont. He served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1952-54.

He and his brother, Henry, took over the dock building business started by their father. Henry, who was also Southold Town supervisor, was killed in a car accident while in office in 1960, leaving his brother to run the business.

Tuthill met his wife, Carol Keating, at a party on the South Fork, and they married in 1959. They had five children. She died eight years ago.

John Costello, an East End marine contractor who started his business in 1963, remembered Tuthill as a man with strong principles, and who was always willing to teach others.

"He was an educator," Costello said. "I worked with him on a few occasions... he was the most principled engineer I ever met in my life."

Costello said Tuthill never charged a commercial fisherman for work, a lesson he also learned. "Of course, I get free fish for the rest of my life," he said.

Besides his son, Lawrence Jr., Tuthill is survived by four

other children: Dr. Theresa A. Tuthill of New London, Conn.; Nora E. Tuthill-Glueck of Fairport, N.Y.; Bridget C. Tuthill of Arlington, Va.; and Megan E. Tuthill of Boston; a sister, Marjorie Tuthill of Narragansett, R.I., and eight grandchildren.

There will be a visitation today from 2-4 p.m. and from 7-9 p.m. at the Horton-Mathie Funeral Home, 735 Front St., Greenport, Mass. will be celebrated tomorrow at 10 a.m. at St. Agnes R.C. Church, Greenport, with interment with military honors to follow at St. Agnes R.C. Cemetery.

The family has requested that, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be sent to the Greenport Fire Department, P.O. Box 58, Greenport, N.Y., 11944.

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