



Daniel V. McNamee III

September 21, 1944 - April 15, 2026

It's hard to re-create the story of a life cut short in its prime a generation ago; too much has been forgotten or lost since a debilitating stroke in 2000 ended his professional career. But the story of Daniel V. McNamee III, who died April 15, at the age of 81, is also one of a man who insisted on the life he still had to live, carrying on with pride, energy and determination to remain an active part of the world of his family, his friends and the causes he cared about.

Dan was educated at the Albany Academy and Phillips Academy Andover. He graduated from Yale University ('67) in Russian Studies, followed by graduate work in Modern Languages at Balliol College, Oxford. Brief months away from completion, he was drafted into the US Army in April of 1969, and returned to New York for basic training. Fluent in Russian and French, he was saved from deployment to Vietnam by serving as a translator and interpreter in Russian at the Counter Insurgency Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, NC, while teaching French to the Green Berets. Family lore records that Dan was also saved by his last name: The recruits were lined up in alphabetical order, counting down for the number needed. A to L were sent to Viet Nam; M to Z were re-assigned at home. He was decommissioned early for "seasonal employment," to manage the ski shop at Bromley Mt. in Vermont, introducing financial controls that promoted him to CFO and earning free ski passes for the whole family. From there he moved into New York City, to start his life.

His first major project was the co-founding of [MORE] magazine, a journalism review, where he was managing editor 1973-1974. This was followed by his joining Downe Communications, publisher of The Ladies Home Journal, where he was director of circulation from 1974-1977, later promoted to director of planning at affiliate Chartcom, 1977-1978, and then vice president for consumer marketing at the parent company Charter Publishing. In October 1978, he married Susan Anderson Thompson of Darien, CT, and in 1979, launched his own firm, McNamee Consulting Company, in New York City.

Over 25 years, he built the business to a staff of 12 and played a wide reaching role in the publishing world: This included brokering the 1984 sale of US News and World Report to Mortimer Zuckerman, and the 1989 Ringier AG acquisition of W.A. Krueger Co., advising on the 1990 founding of Entertainment Weekly, and guiding the 1997 launch of Condé Nast Traveler, among many others. The 1994 acquisition the magazines of The New York Times by Grüner + Jahr, attracted particular attention, making the German company for the first time a leading publishing house in the United States.

In his private life, Dan lived in a world of books, with walls of shelves sagging with literature, politics, history and art. A devoted sportsman, he was a fine skier, played competitive tennis and squash, and loved sailing, both from his home in Rye, New York, and his family's summer home in Little Cranberry Island in Maine. His other great love was ocean liners, beginning with a family round trip to England on the Queen Mary in the 50s, to later trips in the early 60s, when it was still cheaper than flying. Following his graduation in 1967, he joined family friend and Titanic author Walter Lord for the Great Lady's final voyage, disembarking in New York with two of the treasures dispensed to passengers on the final day: an ancient cork and sail cloth life preserver, looped with ropes, with HMS Queen Mary painted proudly in chipped and cracking Royal blue, and a handsome brass sign with an arrow, reading "To the Life Boats". In the 1980s, he supported his friend's work launching the

Ocean Liner Museum in NYC, later relocated to the South Street Seaport Museum, with its dedicated Walter Lord Gallery.

Another of Dan's commitments was to the E.N. Huyck Preserve in Rensselaerville, NY, where he was a long-standing member of the board before and after the stroke. With fellow board member Peter McChesney, Dan developed the Preserve's first land acquisition strategy in the 1990s, focusing on the Lake Myosotis watershed, a document that has been used by the board ever since.

Dan was in high flight in the summer of 2000, when, working late over a weekend and alone in the office, he suffered a hemorrhagic stroke that left him paralyzed on one side and unable to speak. Rather than conceding to the conventional wisdom about stroke recovery, Dan persisted with occupational, physical, and speech therapy for more than two decades, enabling a high degree of independence and a very high quality of life. Among a number of remarkable achievements, Dan joined his speech therapist Therese Pirozzi on stage at the American Speech, Language, Hearing Association 2015 Annual Convention in Denver Colorado. As part of an hour-long back and forth, he delivered a 10-minute solo talk on what was possible for post-stroke Aphasia patients, receiving a standing ovation.

His favorite activities included attending rock concerts, traveling, and spending time at his beloved Hickory Hill in Rensselaerville, NY. He also loved sitting out on the sidewalk in front of his friend Molly O'Neill's house, where passers by would often stop to chat and share village gossip. All through this time, he insisted on his independence, making several trips to Europe on his own, including for a reunion at Balliol College, Oxford, in 2016. Always an elegant dresser, Dan was keen to live up to the black-tie standards of the evening, and his friend David Hooper describes the painstaking efforts to get every stud

lined up and cufflink crisply in place -- making them "fashionably late" for the evening itself.

After the stroke, his marriage ended in divorce and he came to live with his mother, Barbara C.M. Dudley at Hickory Hill in Rensselaerville, until her death in 2011. He then moved to Boston, MA, where he particularly enjoyed a horseback riding therapy program. He moved back to Albany in 2022, to an apartment adjacent to Washington Park, where he often toiled around on his scooter, stopping in at cafés and restaurants in the neighborhood.

As Dan slid into decline, his son, Simon, grabbed the red-eye flight up from Asheville, NC, and spent that final day at his bedside, reading aloud from Patrick O'Brien's Master and Commander.

In addition to his son Simon Cooley McNamee, Dan is survived by his brothers George Cooley McNamee (Kathleen), of Albany, NY; Roger Burroughs McNamee (Ann), of Woodside, CA; and Giles Webb McNamee of Boston, MA; and yours truly, his sister, Dardis McNamee (Simon Ballam) of Vienna, Austria, and Rensselaerville, NY; as well as his cousins Clare McMahan Yates, and Lauree McMahan Hickok (Gregory) and his many nieces and nephews:

These include: Hannah, Daniel and Roger McNamee of Albany, NY and NYC; Austin and Margaret Childs of Vienna, Austria; J.D. and Will O'Toole of Boston, and Webb McNamee of London and George McNamee of San Francisco; Jonathan B. McCauley of Jersey City, N.J.; Christopher Yates (Susan), of San Francisco and Samantha Yates François (Matthew) of Walnut Creek, CA, Helen Hickok Deloye of West Falls Church., VA and Jessica Hickok of San Francisco, CA.

Dan's friends are encouraged to join the family for a Memorial Service on

Saturday, August 1, 2026, at 11:00, at the Rensselaerville Presbyterian Church, on Main Street in Rensselaerville, NY, and burial in the village cemetery, on Methodist Hill Road, followed by a reception and luncheon at Hickory Hill, 194 Cooley Road, Rensselaerville.

To honor Dan's memory, contributions would be welcomed to the E. N. Huyck Preserve and Biological Research Station, P.O. Box 189, 5052 Delaware Turnpike, Rensselaerville, NY 12147; (518) 797-3440; info@huyckpreserve.org.

Upcoming Events

Service

AUG 1. 11:00 AM (ET)

Rensselaerville Presbyterian Church
Methodist Hill Road
Rensselaerville, NY

Tribute Wall

GB

“ May the four winds blow you safely home, Dan. We had so many fun times at so many Moonalice shows, and I'll never forget the one in Sullivan Hall, NYC, when we sang along to TMIOK at the top of our voices, or the concert in Union Square, SF, where I took this photo of you. R.I.P. 💔



Gail Barnes - May 30 at 10:40 PM



I had the pleasure of Dan's company many times over the years . Backstage at Oakland Colosseum with U 2 and Moonalice many years ago. On another occasion we were able to met in Paris with his entourage . A very fine lunch was had by all.. He was a gentleman of fun and kindness . My condolences to his brilliant family and friends . I'm sorry for your great loss. In Ireland we like to say when we loose a friend. " He left without permission "
R I P
Dan

Diarmuid Harrington - June 02 at 03:15 AM