



Corbin 39 Association

Newsletter #2

May 2020



#61 "Cosmic Debris" in Haida Gwaii, Canada at sunset, photo courtesy Wendi Morrison

We start this newsletter #2 with the news that Lester Helmus passed away late last year, and this obituary contributed by George Weeks.

Lester Helmus April 20, 1929 - October 30, 2019.

Many current and past Corbin 39 owners will know of and may have corresponded with Lester Helmus.

Lester created and, for nearly twenty years, curated the first Corbin 39 website. He was the main actor in creating a Corbin online community.

Lester Helmus passed away last October at the age of 90 years.



Lester Helmus, photo courtesy . Erin Ben-Moche

A few months before his passing the following was written about him:

“Lester Helmus never stands still. He’s either strolling through his apartment complex in Koreatown, Los Angeles, overseeing a boat club, studying Torah with Downtown L.A. Chabad, holding meetings to make his community stronger or exercising.

Helmus was a chemical engineer and spent three years in the Navy during the Korean War. He also taught junior and high school chemistry and math and sailed around the world five summers in a row. “I couldn’t stand sitting at a desk,” he said. “I needed to move around.”

Helmus said his need for different projects stems from the fact that he moved constantly as a child.

During the Great Depression, his father abandoned him and his two brothers while his mother was seriously ill. At first, he lived with his grandmother but eventually was sent to the first Jewish orphanage in Philadelphia.

“It was very hard,” Helmus said. “I lost all my self-esteem. I didn’t realize that until much later in life.”

Helmus went on to study engineering at Drexel University, Philadelphia, where the dean took him under his wing. "I loved the man," Helmus said. "He was like a father. He gave me my self-esteem."

The lifelong bachelor said he believes his mother, who passed away when he was a boy, was his guardian angel through it all and the reason he believes in God today.

In addition, because Drexel had such an impact on his life, Helmus has donated more than \$25,000 to the university's Judaic studies program over the past 10 years, so that he can pay it forward and help other students like him.

But his greatest love is sailing. Helmus said he was never a golfer or a skier, but after watching boats dock in New Jersey, he knew he should ride the waves to Cape Cod and Bermuda.

"It would have made a great book," he said, noting that he never got into the habit of journaling or taking pictures, so he hasn't documented his travels. "I'm not sure who would read it," he said, "but it would have been a good story."

Erin Ben-Moche, 17 July 2019

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Los Angeles

Although activity on Lester's corbin39.com site waned in recent years he continued to be interested in keeping the site active. Through his estate, rights to the information he contributed over the years has been granted to the new corbin39.org.

Before Facebook and other near real-time internet services, Lester acted as a "clearinghouse" for questions and answers submitted by owners. Many of these appear in the current FAQ section of our corbin39.org website where they will continue to be as useful to new and current owners as they have been in the past.

Farewell and thank-you Lester.
George Weeks

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The website is our longer term information repository. In contrast the place to go for community chit-chat and interaction is our Corbin 39 Facebook Group. That is where people discuss how best to seal hatches, post

photos of their boats, ask for advice on buying Corbins, and many other things. We appreciate that some people really don't want to go anywhere near Facebook, but that is what we have chosen as a platform for the quick-turnover part of our Corbin community chatter so please can we gently encourage you to go there. Anybody with a genuine interest in Corbins is granted access, but you must answer the entry-gate questions please as that helps the volunteer moderators sift joining requests. There are 98 members at the moment so we are clearly answering a need. It seems as if everyone is pretty much in lockdown the whole world over due to the coronavirus pandemic, so good health to all and stay safe. I expect we will post another newsletter fairly soon, but let us leave this one for now as an obituary for Lester Helmus with thanks from us all.

yours aye,
David Sharman
(#123, Bockra)