



Fortunat F. Mueller-Maerki

February 22, 1946 - June 1, 2026

Fortunat Mueller-Maerki, age 80, passed away on Monday, June 1, 2026, leaving behind a life marked by intellectual curiosity, generosity, and a deep appreciation for family, community, and the study of time. Born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1946, Fortunat developed an early fascination with clocks and watches that would become a lifelong passion. He studied economics at the University of Bern before earning his MBA from Harvard Business School in 1975. Following graduation, he began a distinguished 25-year career with Egon Zehnder International, an executive search firm. In 1980, Fortunat and his family settled in Scarsdale, New York, later making homes in New York City and the Pochuck section of Vernon Township, New Jersey. A respected leader and scholar in the horological world, Fortunat was a longtime member and contributor to the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (NAWCC), where he served in leadership roles including Board member and head of the Library Collections Committee. He was honored as a Silver Star Fellow, the organization's highest distinction. An accomplished writer and researcher, he authored more than 200 articles and organized educational study tours throughout Europe and America. Fortunat's lifelong love of books and preservation led him to assemble one of the world's most significant private horological libraries. In 2021, he donated his collection of nearly 25,000 items to the Horological Society of New York, creating the foundation of the Jost Bürgi Research Library, where he

was honored as Librarian Emeritus. In addition to these scholarly pursuits, Fortunat was a founding member of the Zunft Witikon guild, a cultural initiative that

celebrates Zurich's rich traditions and brings people together in fellowship. Beyond his professional and scholarly accomplishments, Fortunat remained committed to service and community. He was a member of the Harvard

Club, the Grolier Club, the Manhattan Rotary Club, and later the Wallkill Valley Rotary Club, and was recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow for his dedication and service.

Fortunat was a lifelong bibliophile, an enthusiastic collector, and someone known for his brilliance, humor, and unmistakable laugh. He is survived by his beloved wife, Ruth, whom he met in middle school; his children, Ruth H. Mueller of Brunswick, Maine, Fortunat C. Mueller and his wife, Shana, of North Yarmouth, Maine, and Matthias Mueller and his wife, Tiffany, of Raleigh, North Carolina; his brother, Andreas Mueller; his sisters, Elisabeth Thoma and Jennifer Mueller; his half-siblings, Christoph Mueller Berva and Sabine Thalmann; and his five cherished grandchildren, Anna-Lia, Jasmine, Sydney, Zaramina, and Emerson. His legacy lives on through

his family, his scholarship, and the countless people inspired by his passion for preserving history and measuring time. According to Fortunat's wishes, no services will be held and family and friends will honor him privately. Private cremation services have been entrusted to the Pinkel Funeral Home, 31 Bank Street (Route 23), Sussex. Online condolences may be

offered to the family at www.pinkelfuneralhome.com. In lieu of flowers, you may consider making memorial donations to the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (www.nawcc.org/) or the Rotary Foundation (www.rotary.org)

Cemetery Details

Private Cremation Services

Tribute Wall

MG

“ Margaret G. planted a grove of 5 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Fortunat F. Mueller-Maerki.

Margaret G. - June 13 at 07:07 PM

CD

“ Dear Ruth and family: We were sorry to learn of Fortunat's passing. We remember being in your Riverside Dr. home for an interesting and enjoyable visit and also the four of us at Muriel's apartment. Chuck enjoyed trying to figure out how his many clocks worked. We have not been to NYC for a number of years as we find it difficult to travel any distance now. Thinking of you, Margaret and Chuck Dingman, Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

Chuck Dingman - June 08 at 04:57 PM

ET

“ Dear brother Fortunat.
You werent always an easy brother . But a reliable one. You were always there, when we needed help. Family was important for you.

Our political views were quite different . We fought (Our parents learned us to stick to our opinion). But you were always fair.
I never reached your level of intelligence, so I lost most of our discussions.
I miss you

Your sister Elisabeth

(Sorry, my mothertonge is swiss, so my english isn't very elegant)

Elisabeth Thoma-Müller - June 07 at 02:46 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Fortunat F. Mueller-Maerki.*



June 06 at 02:09 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Fortunat F. Mueller-Maerki.

June 06 at 02:09 PM