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Edward Nixon, President's Brother and Champion, Is Dead at 88

Edward C. Nixon in 2011. "Because we never shared a boyhood," he said of the president, "he assumed the role of assistant father and mentor."

Jebb Harris/The Orange County Register, via Associated Press

By **Sam Roberts**

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Edward C. Nixon, the youngest and last surviving brother of former President Richard M. Nixon and a faithful guardian of his White House legacy, died on Wednesday in Bothell, Wash., near Seattle. He was 88.

His death, in a nursing home, was announced by the Richard Nixon Foundation.

Mr. Nixon, a geologist and energy consultant by profession, was 17 years younger than his [brother Richard](#). He worked on his brother's 1968 presidential campaign and was co-chairman of his re-election committee in 1972.

"I'd have to say Dick was more than a brother," Mr. Nixon recalled in "The Nixons: A Family Portrait" (2009), which he wrote with Karen L. Olson. "Because we never shared a boyhood, he assumed the role of assistant father and mentor."

A few months after President Nixon's inauguration in 1969, Edward was offered the chairmanship of the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska by Commerce Secretary [Maurice H. Stans](#). But he decided not to accept the post after questions were raised about nepotism and a possible conflict of interest.

He later testified as a defense witness in the conspiracy trial of Mr. Stans and [John N. Mitchell](#), the former attorney general. They were charged with obstruction of justice and perjury in 1974 involving what the government said was their effort to impede an investigation of the financier [Robert L. Vesco](#) in return for his secret \$200,000 cash contribution to President Nixon's re-election campaign. Both men were acquitted.

Edward Nixon testified that Mr. Stans had told him that it was immaterial whether the \$200,000 was provided by cash or by check, undercutting the prosecution's claim that the contribution was intended to be covert.

Edward Calvert Nixon was born on May 3, 1930, in Whittier, Calif., where his father, Frank, ran a grocery store. He once described his mother, Hannah (Milhous) Nixon, as "the judge" and his father as "the executioner."

Mr. Nixon in August 1968 during his brother Richard's second, and successful, campaign for the presidency. He was later co-chairman of President Nixon's re-election campaign.

Anthony Calvacca/New York Post Archives, via Getty Images

Like the other brothers, Harold, Francis Donald (known as Don) and Arthur, Edward Nixon was named for an English king. Harold died when he was 23, Arthur when he was 7. [Don died in 1987](#), and the former president in 1994.

Edward earned a bachelor of science degree in geology from Duke University in 1952 and a master's in geological engineering from North Carolina State University in 1954. He served in the Navy as an aviator, helicopter flight instructor and in the Naval Reserve as a professor of naval science at the University of Washington.

He was the president of Nixon World Enterprises, an energy consulting firm, from 1971 until his death.

In 1957 he married Gay Lynne; she died in 2014. His survivors include their daughters, Amelie Peiffer and Elizabeth Matheny.

President Nixon's daughters, Tricia Nixon Cox and Julie Nixon Eisenhower, said in a statement released by the foundation that their uncle was "a source of guidance to our father, whose favorite little Eddie grew up into a renowned geologist with infectious curiosity."

Edward Nixon recalled in his memoir that he and his brother shared a special regard, given their age difference.

"I considered Dick to be outgoing with his ears — not with his mouth," he wrote. "Through thought-provoking questions, he encouraged me to learn and solve problems. More than anyone else in the family, he could stand back from a contentious situation and give impartial and convincing advice."

At 6-foot-1, Edward Nixon was taller than his brother the president, but their facial features, hand gestures and speaking styles were similar. After the 1968 election, he was asked why, as an ardent supporter, he hadn't worn a campaign button.

"I do," he replied. "Right here." He pointed to his nose.

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