



## Philip Robert Austin

June 10, 1936 - October 5, 2021

### Philip Robert Austin

Dr. Philip Robert Austin was born June 10, 1936 to parents Clara and Philip Austin. Philip grew up in New Rochelle, New York where he attended Holy Family grammar school and Iona Preparatory High School. He then moved to Detroit where he studied aeronautical engineering as an undergraduate at the University of Detroit. During his undergraduate education, he worked for several aerospace companies as a co-op student, working with various aircraft systems, primarily the F-105. Philip continued his education as a graduate student at the California Institute of Technology. His academic career culminated in being awarded a doctorate degree in aeronautical engineering.

Upon completion of his education, Doc, as he was known affectionately, served as an officer in the Air Force for four years. During his military service he served as the military's expert for troubleshooting structural issues with the F-105. He was briefly deployed to Vietnam where he solved an ordnance loading issue which had been hampering the air strike capabilities of the US military. An unexpected air-to-air combat encounter, during a test flight of his fix to the F-105, prompted his return stateside.

Doc's most noted accomplishment during his military service, one which would define his professional career, was that he was assigned to lead an Air Force project regarding the need for clean environments, now known as cleanrooms. These cleanrooms were needed for the manufacturing and assembly of sophisticated propulsion, navigation, and telemetry systems for both the military and space programs. As leader of this project, Doc developed the principles of cleanroom design and operation, creating the term "cleanroom" and the specifications that are used today to design, build, operate, and test cleanrooms throughout the world. Doc also worked closely with NASA, and his work was an integral component to the success of the Apollo missions, and other space exploration missions that followed.

After serving in the Air Force, Doc moved to the Detroit area and founded a company to train engineers on how to design, build, and operate cleanrooms. During his 60-year career, he was known as the world's leading expert on cleanrooms; training thousands of engineers throughout the world, designing hundreds of cleanrooms, and authoring seven

textbooks on the subject of cleanrooms. His work has directly enabled the manufacture of all the computers, electronic devices, pharmaceutical products, and medical devices that are in use today. His company, now known as Acorn Industries, continues to provide specialized cleanroom services to companies worldwide.

Philip was married for 48 years to Elaine Plas (deceased). He is survived by his brothers Gerry, Frank, and Richard, and his sister Claire. He is also survived by his daughter Lisa, his son Philip and his wife Mary and their children Rosemary, Caroline, and Philip; as well as his daughter Michele and her husband Bob and their children Nicole, Anthony, Rachel, and Ryan, plus 3 great grandchildren Matias, Nora Jo, and Dashed.

He loved to travel, and his favorite destinations were Disney World and Hawaii, where he became a certified scuba driver.

His knowledge, wisdom, compassion for others, generosity, and sense of humor will be greatly missed.

Visitation will be at the O'Brien/Sullivan Funeral Home, 41555 Grand River Avenue, Novi, 248-348-1800 on Friday, October 15, 2021 from 3:00 PM - 8:30 PM with a K of C service at 7:00 PM. Instate Saturday, October 16, 2021 at Church of the Holy Family, 24505 Meadowbrook Road, Novi from 10:30 AM until time of funeral liturgy 11:00 AM. Memorial donations may be made to the The Capuchin Soup Kitchen(<http://www.cskdetroit.org>) [Click Here to see the funeral live stream\(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrm\\_liGU2h-VTo88z0uRzPQ\)](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrm_liGU2h-VTo88z0uRzPQ))

# Cemetery

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# Events

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## Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

25800 W 10 Mile Rd  
Southfield, MI,

**OCT**  
**15**

### Visitation

03:00PM - 08:30PM

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O'Brien Sullivan Funeral Home

41555 Grand River Ave, Novi, MI, US, 48375

**OCT**  
**16**

### Liturgy

11:00AM

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Church of the Holy Family

24505 Meadowbrook Rd, Novi, MI, US, 48375-2845

# Comments

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“ John Worniak lit a candle in memory of Philip Robert Austin



John Worniak - October 16 at 06:29 PM

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“ John Worniak sent a virtual gift in memory of Philip Robert Austin



John Worniak - October 15 at 06:20 PM

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“ Dear Dr. Austin and Mary,  
I was extremely saddened upon hearing the passing of your father. I only had the opportunity to meet your father once but that one and only meeting left me with an impression of a wonderful, bright, energetic and caring person. It's unfortunate that I never had the opportunity to enjoy his company once again. No doubt he will be truly missed not only by his family but by the industry he served and loved. His expertise and knowledge was second to none!  
My deepest and sincere sympathy are extended to you and your family during this most difficult time. May your father rest in peace!  
Nick DeBello

Nicholas DeBello - October 15 at 06:06 PM

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“ Loving Grace was purchased for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



October 15 at 01:10 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



October 15 at 10:59 AM

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“ I never met Doc, but benefited first hand from his pioneering work in the processing of pharmaceutical primary packaging. So thankful for his legacy and passing the focus to his son. This work touches hundreds of thousands of lives and is a foundation for safe injectable drug delivery.  
With deepest condolences, Robert Popilock

**Robert Popilock** - October 15 at 10:50 AM

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“ Philip Robert Austin was the kindest, most loving, generous, intelligent, forgiving, funny, thoughtful man I have ever met, I loved him dearly and have years of beautiful memories with him and because of him. He loved to eat, so do I and we did at every kind and venue enjoying ourselves so much! He treated so many of his employees to trips to Disney and the surrounding attractions at his timeshare there. I could never have afforded to do that myself, but his love of people and to share what God had blessed him with, he always shared. Helping people and donating to causes he believed in was always in his heart.

He loved his family so very much and took such pride in them. When my Mom would visit from Florida he would come over and we'd play board games, eat and laugh a lot! There is a litany of wonderful, fun, loving memories of him. I would need more room to write!

I loved Doc so very much, we shared so much and we were always there for each other.

My heart aches for his loss, but I am happy he is in heaven with his other loved ones. What a huge gap in my life but I will pray and talk to him always. I love you Doc, Ginny

Ginny Livingstone - October 15 at 08:57 AM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



October 14 at 08:47 PM

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“ I first met Doc at a St. Patrick's Day Party at Holy Family, years ago, that I attended at the invite of Ginny Livingstone. Down through the years we had dinners with Doc at his favorite restaurants and he came to parties and we all enjoyed his humor and stories and camaraderie. One year he invited Ginny and me on a trip to Disney! He gladly gave us a tour at Disney and it was a very nice day. He was a kind and generous friend and will be so missed. I will be saying goodbye to him at the same place i first met him. May you rest in peace Doc and share the many experiences and accomplishments of your life with new friends in Heaven and may GOD bless you. Hugs and .  
Your Friend,  
Karen Herrington

Karen Herrington - October 14 at 02:16 PM



“ Bob & Nancy, Steve & Donna purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



**Bob & Nancy, Steve & Donna** - October 14 at 12:50 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



October 14 at 11:24 AM

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“ Frank Austin and Family purchased the Sweet Tenderness for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



**Frank X. Austin** - October 14 at 08:45 AM

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“ John Worniak sent a virtual gift in memory of Philip Robert Austin



John Worniak - October 13 at 09:09 AM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



October 11 at 05:02 PM

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“ Philip was such a great neighbor to us for so many years. He was a wonderful man. I will miss him a lot. With prayers, John Worniak.



John Worniak - October 11 at 09:13 AM

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“ You will be greatly missed Doc. You were a wealth of knowledge and had a true American Story. A kind soul and most assuredly an inspiration to many; a joy to be around. May you rest in peace.

The Johnson Family

**Johnson Family** - October 08 at 06:25 PM



“ What a wonderful man. I only had the pleasure of meeting Doc a few times, yet each time I walked away feeling happy having the opportunity to talk with him. Such a brilliant man with a loving spirit. He made our world a better place and will be missed by so many.

Rest In Peace Doc. Lovingly, Tara Cooper

**Tara Cooper** - October 10 at 02:41 PM



“ The DWK Life Sciences Family purchased the Gracious Lavender Basket for the family of Philip Robert Austin.



**The DWK Life Sciences Family** - October 07 at 07:33 AM