

## Allan Kliman, MD Obituary



Dr. Allan Kliman passed away peacefully in Palo Alto, CA on December 7, 2025, after a short illness. He was surrounded by family and remembered with love, respect, and admiration.

He is survived by his two sons, Gilbert (Yasemin) and Douglas (Susan), his granddaughter Lara, his grandson Randall, and his younger brother Harvey. He was preceded in death by his wife, Sylvia (née Stern), his parents, Jacob and Minnie, and his older brothers Morton and Bernard.

Allan was the third of four sons of Jacob and Minnie Kliman, who immigrated to Boston from Ukraine in the early 1900s. Born in the depths of the Great Depression, Allan spent his early childhood by the radio listening to FDR Fireside Chats and WWII reports, as well as helping with family chores to get through those challenging times. As a teenager, he worked summers in a local bakery, hauling heavy bags of flour and sugar—an early testament to his determination and work ethic.

Allan attended Boston Latin School, where his academic excellence earned him a scholarship to Harvard College. He went on to get his MD from Harvard Medical School, following in the footsteps of his older brother Bernard, and was awarded the prestigious Soma Weiss prize for research. He completed an internship at Boston's Beth Israel Hospital, where he distinguished himself as a gifted physician with a uniquely positive and caring bedside manner—an optimistic demeanor that was sustained throughout his life.

His career progressed to serving his country as a Senior Assistant Surgeon in the US Public Health Service, where he was stationed in Washington DC at the National Institutes of Health. During his NIH service, Allan specialized in blood banking and conducted breakthrough hematology research. He served in the USPHS reserve, retiring as a Captain (O-6).

After completing his active service in the USPHS, Allan returned to Boston to become Director of the Massachusetts American Red Cross. During his tenure, he was a frequently invited speaker on the local news when blood donations or disaster support were needed. His continuing research led to the development of plasmapheresis, a groundbreaking technology that automated the separation of human blood components and transformed transfusion medicine. He was also a leading consultant to Technicon, a startup success that developed one of the first machines for automated blood testing.

Following his passion for treating patients, Allan joined the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital division of Massachusetts General Hospital as Director of Hematology/Oncology. For more than 40 years, he dedicated himself to caring for patients facing complicated and sometimes terminal illnesses. He offered not only medical expertise but also compassion and hope for all. At Spaulding, he continued his interest in research, conducting groundbreaking research on non-opiate pain relief to more safely reduce patient suffering.

Beyond his professional life, Allan was devoted to his family. He was married to the love of his life and soulmate Sylvia Stern for 54 years, from 1956 until her passing in 2010. Together, they raised their two sons Gilbert and Douglas in a loving home environment focused on values of academic achievement, creative thinking and community service.

In 1966, Allan and Sylvia purchased a small cottage in Ogunquit, Maine, where they created an idyllic beachside retreat for their family and found joy on the New England coast. As a lover of the ocean and all things maritime, Allan taught his sons to swim, snorkel, surf, row, sail and fish, and spent countless hours on the water with them, creating memories that endure to this day. He enjoyed cooking outside in the sea breeze and could often be found grilling fresh fish and hamburgers on his Hibachi grill. His grandson Randall continued the seaside tradition, visiting him in Ogunquit many times to enjoy the beach and sail with him on the tidal river.

Allan also had the unique ability to nurture his sons in their pursuit of endeavors outside his core interest areas. He helped Gilbert and Douglas participate in hobbies such as building model rockets and riding minibikes. He fostered Gilbert's interest in restoring classic cars and playing electric guitar, which later led to a cacophonous high school garage band. He also supported Douglas in building and flying model airplanes and traveling to science fiction conventions to meet well known writers.

A caretaker of animals of all types, Allan allowed his boys to make their childhood home into a menagerie of various pets. He helped them care for goldfish, hamsters, turtles, frogs, toads, tortoises, rabbits, ducklings, three cats and one very loyal dog. He kindled a love for animals in his sons that continues today, most recently manifested in the Kliman family's support to the Equine Assisted Services program at North Dakota State University.

Allan was a lifelong role model to his family, inspiring his son Gilbert to become an eye surgeon and laser researcher, and his son Douglas to become a pilot, geographer and US Navy Reserve officer.

In retirement, after a life spent almost exclusively in Boston, Allan moved across the country to Palo Alto, California to be near Gilbert, his daughter-in-law Yasemin and newly born granddaughter Lara. He cherished each day of the 12 years he spent in Palo Alto, enjoying the closeness of loved ones and the unique academic community around him on the edge of Stanford University. He retained his incredible intellect and optimism throughout his final days, inspiring both family and friends and developing a close relationship with his granddaughter.

During this period, Allan traveled extensively with his family, making trips to places around the world including American national parks, Hawaii, Caribbean islands, Europe, and Australia, where he even petted kangaroos in Tasmania. Most specially, Allan fulfilled a lifelong aspiration when he visited Israel in 2018.

His legacy persists in the countless lives he touched through medicine, public service, research and commitment to his family.

Donations in Allan's name can be made to the American Red Cross to support Blood Banking:

<https://www.redcross.org/donate/donation.html/>

Under "I want to support" click on Disaster Relief to get the full menu of support options.