



Bob Mackin
1934-2024

Bob Mackin, a long-time Albany resident, died at age 90 on October 8 in Ridgefield, CT, where he had moved in 2023.

His death marked the end of a well-traveled and active life as a writer, business owner, and lobbyist in New York and other states and in Washington, as a spokesperson for government agencies and candidates for public office, and as an athlete. Bob was community-minded and philanthropic. He was a mentor to generations of professionals, as well as a great personal friend and family member to many who will miss him.

Jackhammer, his WWII espionage novel published in 2012, earned wide praise from readers and a most favorable Kirkus review which described it as “an extremely confident debut that’s fast-paced and full of surprises.” Early in his multifaceted career, he was the author, co-author, and ghost writer of more than fifty articles that appeared in such national magazines as *Newsweek*, *TV Guide*, *Pageant*, the *New York Times*, the *New York Daily News*, the *Miami Herald*, and *Parade*, the Sunday newspaper supplement which he also served for a brief time as Associate Editor.

He also authored *Comply*, a two-volume work on state laws governing insurance company investments published by NILS Publishing Company, and two books on insurance legislation published by Commerce Clearing House. Early in his writing career, he researched and “first drafted” articles for nationally syndicated financial columnist Sylvia Porter. He also wrote articles for the newsletter of the Alexander Hamilton Institute, and for several insurance journals. He founded in 1985 and published for 20 years *The Insurance Legislators Fact Book and Almanac*, a fact book and directory.

An avid viewer and participant in television game shows, he appeared on *Match Game*, *Password*, and *To Tell the Truth*. The experience served as the basis for an article entitled “Play for Pay,” published in *TV Guide*.

He began his career as a part-time intern in the press office of NYS Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz in 1957 and then served as assistant press secretary to the Attorney General from 1958 to 1963, serving under and mentored by Press Secretary Charles Stickle.

He entered the private sector in 1964 as Editor of *Red Shield*, an internal publication of the Royal Globe Insurance Companies. He became Associate Editor of *Parade* in 1966 after several years of writing articles for the magazine on a freelance basis.

In 1967, he became chief press officer for the NYS Insurance Department and played a key role winning statewide news media editorial and consumer organization support for no-fault auto insurance reform legislation under Superintendents of Insurance Richard E. Stewart and Benjamin R. Schenck. He left the Insurance Department in 1977 for the NYS Urban Development Corporation (UDC), where he served as Director of Public Affairs under UDC president Edward Logue.

He moved to San Francisco and became Assistant California Insurance Commissioner under Commissioner Wesley Kinder in 1976. During that period, he served on a part-time basis as the chief press officer at national meetings of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). He returned to New York in 1979 to become Chief of Staff to State Senator John R. Dunne, Chair of the Senate Insurance Committee.

At different times, he took leaves of absence to work on statewide election campaigns. He served as campaign press secretary in successful re-election campaigns for Attorney General Lefkowitz in 1970 and 1974, and the successful election campaign of Hugh R. Jones for Judge of the NYS Court of Appeals in 1972. At the time state law required the popular election of judges to sit on the state's highest court. In 1976, he served as campaign press secretary for U.S. Senator James L. Buckley in his re-election campaign against Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Bob founded Mackin & Company, a lobbying, public affairs, and association management company, in 1985. Over the years the firm, now Mackin & Casey, has served a variety of private and public sector clients.

Private sector clients have included the Association of Financial Guaranty Insurers, whose members insure the timely payment of principal and interest on municipal bonds and other public and private debt issued by entities in the U.S., Europe, and Asia, the Industry Education Council, the Capital Craft Beverage Trail, the NYS Distillers Guild, the NYS Cider Association, Lawyers Title Insurance Company, Classified Insurance Company, the Excess Line Association of New York, NORCAL Insurance Company, the College of Insurance, the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, Benfield, an international insurance brokerage and consulting firm, and the Royal Insurance Companies.

The company's public sector clients have included the National Council of Insurance Legislators, the Insurance Legislators Foundation, and the National Conference of Legislators from Gaming States and its foundation.

Raised in Jamaica and Garden City, Long Island, he was a graduate of the Immaculate Conception School in Jamaica Estates, Queens, class of February 1948, and Brooklyn Preparatory School in Brooklyn. He was a finalist in the 440 yard National Indoor Private School Championships at Madison Square Garden in 1950.

He graduated from Fordham University with a bachelor's degree in Social Sciences in 1955, earned a Master's degree in communications from Fordham in 1959, and served as president of the Fordham Graduate Student Association.

At Fordham, he earned three varsity letters in Track and Field and competed briefly for the New York Athletic Club following graduation. In college, he competed in races against world class runners. At the 1953 Millrose Games at New York's Madison Square Garden, he led off a Fordham mile-relay team against a world class Grand Street Boys relay team that included Olympic Gold Medalists Herb McKenley, Andy Stanfield, George Rhoden and Mal Whitfield. In his senior year, he was a member of a Fordham mile-relay team that included his lifelong friend Tom Courtney, two-time Olympic gold medalist (800 meter run and 1600 meter relay, Melbourne 1956).

Bob leaves behind a brother, retired Judge Ralph R. Mackin, and sister-in-law, Lorraine Fragette Mackin of North Salem, nephews Ralph R. Mackin, Jr. (Bridgette Shaffer), of Newtown, CT, and John C. Mackin (Joseph Loverro, DC) of Nichols, and a niece, Meredith Mackin Rilley (Bill Rilley) of New Fairfield, CT, a great-nephew, Ralph R. Mackin III of Denver, CO, and great-nieces, Cassidy Mackin Rilley of New York City and Mckenna Mackin Rilley of New Fairfield, CT.

Bob was predeceased by his friend and companion of many years Elizabeth Hough Barker of Delmar, and leaves behind her children Lawrence Barker (Kristen) of Poughkeepsie, Ellen Barker Dunagan of Arlington, VA, John Barker (Emily) of Greenville, SC, Catherine Barker Zuckerman (Eric), of Bethesda, MD, James Barker (Justine), of Mendham, NJ, and her 13 grandchildren who adored him and loved that Bob was part of their family.

Bob also leaves behind his former wife and friend Jean Meehan of Burlington, VT, and two stepsons, Brad Meehan (Christine) of Amherst, NH and John Meehan, MD (Tammy) of Mercer Island, WA.

He was a communicant of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and St. Mary's Church.

On Thursday, October 17, there will be a Mass of Christian Burial at St. Mary's Church, 10 Lodge St. in Albany at 10:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Elizabeth Hough Barker Memorial Scholarship, c/o Siena College, 515 Loudon Road, Loudonville, NY 12211.

An Albany celebration of Bob's life for his friends, family, and colleagues will be announced at a later date.

This is a more expansive version of [Bob's obituary, which you can find here](#).