



## Seldon Kenneth Griffen III

June 29, 1948 - February 23, 2018

Seldon Kenneth “Ken” Griffen III, 69, of Kensington, husband of Donna (Carter) Griffen, passed away Friday, February 23, 2018 at the Hospital of Central CT in New Britain. Born in Hartford on June 29, 1948, the son of the late Selden K. Griffen, Jr. and Vera Mae (Nystrup) Griffen, he was a former New Britain resident, moving to Kensington in 1996.

Ken was a graduate of the Mooreland Hill School, New Britain High School, and the University of Connecticut. After college graduation he later joined his dad in the world of finance, at Advest in New Britain. Ken went on to become a Senior Vice President at both Merrill Lynch and Janney Montgomery Scott where he was a senior member of the Seaport Wealth Management Financial Advisory Team.

Ken’s had a passion for music and he was a working musician from his teenage years until his passing. His high school band, the Ogres, spent a memorable summer in 1966 on Martha’s Vineyard. Thrilling for a bunch of teenagers from New Britain! Ken started out as a guitarist but found his place as a stellar piano player/keyboardist, harmonica player, and singer. He was a founding member of the legendary Connecticut rock band, Fountainhead, which started in 1974 and is still going strong. Ken shared his love of playing in the band with his daughter Virginia, performing together over many decades. Enchanted by the Vineyard, years later, Ken and his wife Donna

bought a home there and during his summer stays, Ken performed at many venues on the island. Music was elemental in Ken's life; his joy, his freedom, his means of expression.

Community was very important to Ken. He was generous and put service to others above himself. Ken was the current Vice President of the New Britain-Meriden YMCA, Past President and member of the New Britain-Berlin Rotary Club, and was on the boards of many philanthropic organizations. He was on the Vestry of St Mark's Episcopal Church, and a long-time member of the Shuttle Meadow Country Club Round Table. He was a board member of the East Chop Beach Club and active in many organizations on Martha's Vineyard.

Ken's family know him as the keeper of memories and photographs. He was the family historian and the go-to guy if you were researching anything about the past. He was also the one that brought everyone together. Above all, family was everything to him.

Besides his wife Donna, he leaves a son, Selden K. Griffen IV of Kensington; three daughters, Virginia Griffen of Rocky Hill; Laura Brazeil of New Rochelle, NY; and Rebecca Griffen of Kensington; a brother, Thomas Griffen and his wife Anna who reside in Ellijay, GA; two grandchildren, Silas Griffen-Sullivan and Zara Griffen-Sullivan; a nephew, Gus Griffen and many dear cousins.

Calling hours are THURSDAY March 1st from 4 to 8 PM at Carlson Funeral Home, 45 Franklin Square, New Britain. Funeral services are SATURDAY March 3rd at 2 PM at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 147 West Main Street, New Britain. Burial will be in Fairview Cemetery at the convenience of the family. There will be Celebration of Life at Shuttle Meadow Country Club following the funeral service for Ken's family and close friends. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Rotary Club Foundation, 14280

Collections Center Drive, Chicago, IL 60693 or to the New Britain – Meriden YMCA, 50 High Street, New Britain, CT 06051. Please share a memory or note of sympathy at [www.carlsonfuneralhome.com](http://www.carlsonfuneralhome.com)

# Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Calling Hours

MAR 1. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Carlson Funeral Home  
45 Franklin Square  
New Britain, CT 06051  
(860) 225-6361  
carlsonfh@aol.com  
<https://www.carlsonfuneralhome.com/>

### Funeral Service

MAR 3. 2:00 PM (ET)

St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
147 West Main Street  
New Britain, CT 06051

# Tribute Wall

JT

“ To Ken's family and colleagues: I was so sorry to hear of Ken's passing. My condolences to Ken's wife and children and his extended 'family' of friends, colleagues, and those, like me, who came to trust his investment judgement. Further, all of us from New Britain will always remember our brother. Rock on, Kenny!

John Tarnuzzer - March 07, 2018 at 06:29 PM

SM

“ Susan Madrak lit a candle in memory of Seldon Kenneth Griffen III



Susan Madrak - March 04, 2018 at 06:54 PM

SM

My condolences to Donna & the entire Griffen family. I adored Ken, from when I first met him through my cousin Calvin Zaiko. We had a summer house on the Vineyard, and Ken would come up with Calvin. We were about 14, and I used to chase Ken around telling him he was the most handsome boy I'd ever seen! My heart is broken over his loss. He talked of his family all the time, and I pray their strength will guide them through this time. Rest in peace my friend. Keep the music going in Heaven

Susan Madrak - March 04, 2018 at 07:01 PM

GB

“ Dear Griffen family, My condolences go out to the entire Griffen family. Kenny’s loss is a shock to all of us. We grew up in the “Hill” together and share many wonderful memories when he was in the ogre band. It’s shock beyond belief and saddens me to think he leaves family and so many friends in mourning. Hopefully the wonderful memories will carry you through this difficult time.

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**Gisella Finn Banga** - March 01, 2018 at 10:38 PM

LI

*I met Ken and his family when they moved to Pennsylvania Ave. I lived across the street from them and remember some nights when the band (Fountainhead) got together to practice. He was a “famous” person to most of the kids who lived on the dead end as they were either in the teens or younger.*

*Whenever the band played at the Shell I and my husband and then children would go to listen to them. Eventually it would only be me and my kids, but we would meet so many friends older and younger at the Shell listening, singing or dancing to the music.*

*My deepest condolences to Virginia and the rest of the family.*



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**Linda** - March 02, 2018 at 10:04 AM

MA

“ *Such a talent lost too soon. Condolences to the Griffen family*

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**mary Abrahamian** - March 01, 2018 at 05:59 PM

SL

“ *To Virginia and the entire Griffen family:  
I was absolutely shocked to hear of your loss. I remember Ken fondly from Mooreland Hill. I taught, coached and advised Virginia. He was a really supportive parent. I am so, so sorry about this sad news. I will keep you all in my thoughts.*

*Sincerely,  
Sheila Lavey*

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**Sheila Lavey** - March 01, 2018 at 04:52 PM



“ I was barely 18, the summer of 1979 and out of nowhere I'm now working for Fountainhead, roadie,,,,, Crew,,,,, Stage Manager,,,,,, Band Mother... 1979 - 1980..

Wow, an experience....A LIFETIME no one could imagine .. the Band of all Bands.. And Kenny ..Kenny my gosh,,, Dave, Arty, Marc, Gordie, ... and Johnny. Are you kidding. The day to day, week to week as months went flying by, handled by Paul, lighting amazing, and his best brother on sound, and then me. Dave K. handled the financial necessities, the rest of the band handled who they were (are) and yup... Kenny.... particular in every way. The Piano "ONE WAY"..... The organ and Leslie Wurlitzer Cabinet ( and Oh if it wasn't Whirling...My Ass). Perfectionist. Yes ... Yet, what he wanted to produce and all to go home with was Perfection. I didn't mind. I learned... Absorbed... It was..... Fascinating .....My God what an education.

I spent many a week, month, day on Chappy. Sometimes buried in the tide. In Edgertown a lifetime in the town vault doing research on "Tax Takings" off the reservation, yet never ran into Kenny. Strange how lives cross again and yet never seen.

I can only speak of what I know. I was born and raised in New Britski,... working for the best of the best. Indulgent of life (no offense). It was magnificent.

I see that his character in life had afforded him great opportunities that he pursued. Everyone accepted him the same way I saw him. Caring, precise and an architect of life. Most of what I see now from his peers and associates and Grand family are memories of a good man. I'm sad to know I missed a large part of Kenny's life. His life was a gift. I didn't know what I really had.

I watch my 13 year old nephew at the New Britian Y (where I once had to live) play Basketball. I hear the Joy on The Vineyard. His love of life, his caring and work ethic carried through his life. This is

*exceptional as we look back on ours. I'm ecstatic to have been there in that time and graciously Happy for everyone who was with him and knew him and for many years.*

*To the Griffens, family's and friends he was and always will be an exceptional friend, mentor and gracious host in my life. I know we will miss Kenny, and I just want everyone to know his lasting impression is still with me and will be forever.*

*The admiration was appropriate.... as to my adulation.... Incurable.*

*Stephen C. Goulart*

*New Britain, CT, / Treasure Island FL.*

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**Stephen Goulart** - March 01, 2018 at 01:50 PM

DH

“*Tita and I are so very saddened to learn of Ken's death. He was such a great supporter of the New Britain Museum for many, many years both as a donor, as a participant, and as someone who made so many events so much fun by playing the piano so beautifully. He had a tremendous talent as a musician and he brought every event to life. I really appreciated his constant friendliness and his ability to see the best in every situation. At First Fridays, at the many Galas, and at innumerable openings he was someone i enjoyed speaking with and exchanging views. He did so much for the new Britain community and will be greatly missed. We asked him to play at Tita's 70th birthday party and as always he was the hit of the evening. i will miss him and want to extend my condolences to his entire family. Douglas Hyland*

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**Douglas Hyland** - February 28, 2018 at 11:16 AM

SK

“ I was saddened and shocked to read of Ken's passing. He became my financial adviser almost 30 years ago at Advest. I followed him to Merrill Lynch and now to Janney because I appreciated his advise and his ability to education this financial fledgling. As others have said, family was everything to Ken. Every meeting with him held ample evidence of his love for his family. My heart breaks for Donna and Ken's whole family and his work family at Janney Montgomery Scott. My deepest sympathy to you all.

*Susan Kalman*

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**Susan Kalman** - February 27, 2018 at 11:50 PM

MP

“ Donna and Family,

*Michael and I were very shocked and saddened to hear of Kens passing. Michael and I had just talked to him recently and had no idea he was ill. He was like family to Michael and his mom. He was like a brother to Michael and a son to Mary. He always took very good care of Mary and she thought the world of him. She loved receiving his family photo Christmas cards every year and displayed them throughout the year. He was always just a phone call away. We were all very lucky and blessed to have had Ken in our lives. Our deepest sympathy goes out to your family. We will keep you in our prayers.*

*Michael and Nancy Perzanowski*

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**Michael & Nancy Perzanowski** - February 27, 2018 at 07:09 PM

TM

“ Dear Ken's Family,  
Are thoughts are with you as you mourn the passing of your beloved Ken. So sudden a departure from you and his friends. Many will miss his presence at St James and his thoughtful, wise words that always enlightened us all.  
With deep sympathy,  
Tanya and Jennifer Malse

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**Tanya Malse** - February 27, 2018 at 09:20 AM

AS

“ Ken was my mother's advisor and then my father's, then and still ours, and now our grown sons as well. We cam to know him as a trusted friend, who loved books, and our business calls always morphed into discussions about what we were reading, recommendations for yet more books, and our families. We treasured our relationship with him and always will. His family came first, always and every time for him in our conversations and we loved him for that. We are so grateful to have had Ken in our lives, and heartbroken for his family.

Peter and Annelieke Schauer

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**Annelieke Schauer** - February 27, 2018 at 07:46 AM

MV

“ Ken took piano lessons from my father and we were the last two pianists to play in the recital (because we were the best!) but it was an agonizing wait of sweaty hands and nervous feelings. We would nervously talk to Pass the time. I knew him the best of all my dad's Students. I touched base with Ken a couple of years ago as he was my parents financial advisor and I was helping my parents out. We had great conversations on the phone. Sad we didn't meet up in person. Rest In Peace my friend. Matt Valenti

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**Matt Valenti** - February 27, 2018 at 06:54 AM

DH

“ I knew Ken as a co member of a group that meets regularly on Martha’s Vineyard. We first met in that group 12 years ago. I knew him as a kind, generous, honest, humble, funny man who brought light into the room every time he entered. I will miss him, especially in the summer, when we saw a lot of him around here. I will miss his stories about his wife and children, about bringing you in your wonderfully overlapping generations together in your home. He found such joy in you; it brought me joy every time I heard him talk about you. You are in my heart and in my prayers, as is Ken, and I look forward too seeing you and to sharing in the celebration of Ken’s life on Saturday. With love and deepest sympathy, Debbie Hart, Vineyard Haven, MA.

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**debbie hart** - February 26, 2018 at 08:41 PM

CG

“ *My family and I are heartbroken at the news of Ken’s passing. Our relationship with the Griffen family goes back decades to Ken’s father who became a trusted advisor to both my grandparents and parents. After his dad’s passing, there was a seamless transition as Ken stepped into his father’s role with my family. As the years went by, Ken became more than a financial advisor. Passing through many of life’s transitions and milestones, we often shared those times with Ken and turned to him for advice. No matter what the impetus – happy, sad, or just business, he was always there with an attentive ear, patience, sound judgment, an engaging personality, and most appreciated – his thoughtful and caring heart.*

*It is difficult for us to process what has happened. We are so grateful to have known Ken...and for that our lives have been enriched. We will miss him always and will keep his memory secure and cherished in our hearts.*

*Our very deepest sympathies to his family and colleagues.  
Richard and Catherine (Sandelli) Girgenti and Family*

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**Catherine Girgenti** - February 26, 2018 at 10:33 AM

BH

“*“Shock” and “sadness” are the two words that immediately came to mind while reading the Hartford COURANT on-line today. Although we’re away, the internet keeps us in touch with important news from home, and this morning’s edition has caused our lives to come to a standstill. Kenny no longer with us? It seems impossible! Not only do we cherish the memories of his enormous musical gifts and the constant presence of his delightful personality, we also have had the benefit of the excellent professional services he has performed as a financial advisor. It seems trite to simply say “he will be missed”, but, indeed -- he WILL be missed... .*

*Mary & Bill (and all the Hennesseys)  
in Niantic and in Florida*

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**Bill Hennessey** - February 26, 2018 at 09:40 AM

JG

“*Donna and family, Ken was an amazing person. Our paths crossed so many times over the years...from Fountainhead, to Rotary, to being a FOB...he epitomized “service above self”. My heart breaks for you, may you find comfort in knowing that Ken helped transform lives and made our community and the world a better place. Judith*

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**Judith Green** - February 26, 2018 at 09:09 AM

DF

“ Donna,

*So sorry to learn of Ken's passing. I was at Advest-Merrill in West Hartford with you both for 18 months before I went to RBC where I retired in 2014. Ken and I always talked music. I had been with Advest since 1971 so I knew the whole family and was a pall bearer at Leon's funeral.*

*can't be with you at the funeral because we are in Florida until mid-March, but my thoughts are with you.*

*Have talked with Roger Loucks down here. He was with Advest from the 1940's and was there until probably 2003. He was the operatic tenor who sang with the Simsbury Light Opera doing Gilbert and Sullivan. he is late 80's and not well so we won't see him this year.*

*my condolences, Dan Fine*

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**Daniel Fine** - February 26, 2018 at 09:03 AM

DF

*Misprint— I meant I was a pallbearer at Leo's funeral and I was the other piano player at Advest. Dan Fine*

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**Daniel Fine** - February 26, 2018 at 09:06 AM

NJ

“ MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO TOMMY & KENNY'S FAMILY. I GREW UP WITH KENNY IN NEW BRITAIN AND SPENT A LOT OF TIME AT HIS HOME LISTENING TO HIM PLAY THE PIANO. HIS FATHER AND MOTHER WERE GREAT PARENTS AND ALWAYS LOVED HAVING A HOUSE FULL OF NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS THERE. I MOVED AWAY FROM NEW BRITAIN AND LOST CONTACT WITH KENNY BUT HE LEFT ME WITH GREAT MEMORIES OF MY YOUNGER DAYS. HE WAS A GREAT MUSICAL TALENT. RIP KENNY. I WILL KEEP YOU & YOUR FAMILY IN MY PRAYERS.  
NICHOLAS M CIANCI, JR



NICHOLAS M CIANCI JR - February 26, 2018 at 08:00 AM

LD

“ I remember the beautiful Christmas tree candy boxes my parents Dick and Sophie Colamussi received from Ken at Christmas time. The candy was delicious. my parents will now see Ken in heaven may he rest in peace

Louise Anne Colamussi Mercadante Daught - February 26, 2018 at 02:13 AM

VH

Remember doing the 1966 World World Fair together in New York good things from here on friend

Vincent Hayes - February 26, 2018 at 06:26 AM

SP

So sorry to read of Ken's passing. I met Ken on Facebook, where we became good friends. We were musically compatible and often spoke about our musical experiences. My thoughts and prayers are with the Griffen family. God bless.

Sebastian Papa - February 26, 2018 at 08:45 AM

EP

*I'm not sure how I came to know Ken but I well remember the first of many adventures we would share. In the summer of 1965 Kenny ,Calvin Zaiko ,Craig Coon and I headed off to Calvin's family beach house on Martha's Vineyard. Calvin introduced us to his neighbors Johnny and Loretta of "Seaview" notoriety. Because some of the folk musicians that played at the Mooncusser and the Unicorn stayed at the Seaview we were able to hear some fine music as they practiced. Ken and Calvin would try and work out songs on the piano at Calvin's. I seem to remember that Calvin and Kenny had the same piano teacher in New Britain at that time. Anyway that's the fit for print condensed version of the first, of what would become, later on in life, many trips to the Vineyard with Ken ,who to me had become as good a friend as a person could ever want.*

*Ed Pasco*

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**Edward Pasco** - February 26, 2018 at 01:32 PM

AB

*With rue my heart is laden  
For golden friends I had,  
For many a rose-lipt maiden  
And many a lightfoot lad.*

*By brooks too broad for leaping  
The lightfoot boys are laid;  
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping  
In fields where roses fade.*

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**A Hill Boy** - February 27, 2018 at 03:21 PM

MG

*It has been a long time since I have see Ken. We were classmates in school, and I remember him picking the erasers off of pencils and throwing them at me, just having fun. I am saddened by the news of his passing. Thoughts and prayers go out to his family.*

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**Marsha Gamba** - February 28, 2018 at 07:11 AM

JM

*I'm so saddened to have just learned of Ken's passing. I only knew him through seeing his band, Fountainhead, countless times in the late 70s and early 80s, but his enthusiasm for the music of the band, his larger than life stage presence, and his swagger leading the band have brought wonderful memories to me for the last 35-40 years. Thankfully, Ken will live on for me in the (legal) recordings I have, as well as many (illicit ones) I made over the years. I have no doubt heaven is a better place with Ken there playing his "Mississippi Saxophone". Hopefully, I'll see you there. RIP Kenny, and God Bless you and your family.*

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**John M** - October 26, 2018 at 08:47 PM