



Brought to you by [Jordan-Fernald Funeral Homes](#)

## Kaighn Smith MD

Mount Desert, Maine

November 5, 1928 - September 18, 2021

3 New Posts



3 Trees or Condolences have been sent in support of Kaighn's family — [View on Tribute Wall](#)

### Obituary & Events

### Tribute Wall

#### Kaighn Smith MD Obituary

Northeast Harbor

Kaighn Smith, M.D., revered Philadelphia physician and iconic ocean sailing racer, died peacefully on September 18th at his home in Northeast Harbor, Maine. Present were his loving children, Gay, Laurie and Kaighn Jr.. He was 92 years old. His wife of 70 years, Rev. Ann Robb Smith, died on June 6 in the identical setting.

Dr. Smith was the son of Katherine Coolidge Smith and Geoffrey Story Smith of Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. Raised on their small farm, he was strong for his size due to farm life, and he became an excellent horseman and athlete. He attended Chestnut Hill Academy in Philadelphia and then enrolled in

[Share a Memory](#)

[Plant a Tree](#)

After graduating from Harvard University, Dr. Smith attended the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. In his third year, he watched a baby being delivered and was inspired to become an Obstetrician Gynecologist. Upon graduation from medical school, he served two years in the Navy. In 1966, after six years as attending physician at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, he joined Philadelphia's Lankenau Hospital, and in 1974, commenced 22 years as Chairman of Lankenau's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Director of the Residency Program. Residents were in awe of his surgical deftness and the depth of his wisdom. He would eventually lead the hospital as Chief of the Medical Staff.

Dr. Smith loved to teach as much as he loved to practice medicine, holding numerous faculty appointments for decades at the University of Pennsylvania, Jefferson Medical School, and Mt. Desert Island Hospital. Former medical students appreciated that he always took the time to ask about their interests when other physicians never learned their names.

Dr. Smith was known as a leader in his field: he introduced the use of fetal monitors before they were hardly known, purchasing one of the first of these life-saving devices for the hospital; he was the first OBGYN in the Philadelphia area to bring midwives into the practice; and he unceasingly advocated for women to take leadership roles. Upon retiring, he delighted in turning over the helm of his Department of over 60 doctors and numerous midwives to Nancy S. Roberts, whom he recruited.

Dr. Smith's care of his patients, who numbered in the thousands, superseded all other interests. He was universally adored by them, captured by his caring, fatherly figure, his gentle sense of humor, and his calm competence.

He held many leadership positions both within the medical profession and outside of it: as President of the Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia (following in the footsteps of his Great Grandfather, Dr. Albert Holmes Smith), Chairman of the Board of the Philadelphia Contributionship, and Commodore of the Cruising Club of America to name a few. His awards include the Endowed Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Lankenau and the Amos S. Weiner Award for Service and Teaching from Thomas Jefferson University.

In addition to his family and medical practice, Dr. Smith was passionate about sailing. In the late 1950s, he sailed competitively for the Navy in the small, one-design Thistle Class, winning regattas while described by local press as "virtually unknown." He eventually turned to ocean racing, and with a finely honed amateur crew, won (overall) every major ocean race on the eastern seaboard in his Swan 38, Gaylark: the Bermuda Race, Annapolis to Newport, and Marblehead to Halifax. Anyone involved in the high levels of ocean racing at the time knew and respected Dr. Smith and his crew.

Although designed by the world-renowned marine architect, Sparkman & Stephens, the Swan 38 keel was not deep enough. Dr. Smith built a new mold for a longer keel in his basement, had the molten lead from the old keel poured into it at a foundry owned by a patient's husband, and refastened the new keel to the hull. That year (1983), he went on to win the Annapolis-Newport Race. A longtime member and one time commodore of the Cruising Club of America, Dr. Smith provided the idea for and the implementation of what became the "Safety at Sea" program, which has now trained thousands of amateur sailors for handling emergencies aboard offshore sailboats.

## TRIBUTE ARCHIVE

Condolences may be expressed at [www.jordanfernald.com](http://www.jordanfernald.com)

### Events

There are no events scheduled.

You can still show your support by planting a memorial tree in memory of Kaighn Smith MD.

[Plant a Tree](#)

### Tribute Wall

[Share a Memory](#)

**Plant a tree in memory of Kaighn Smith MD**

An environmentally friendly option

[Plant a tree](#)

**1 tree planted in memory of Kaighn Smith MD**



#### **A Memorial Tree was planted for Kaighn Smith MD**

We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ Jordan-Fernald Funeral Homes

I was saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. Smith. Kaighn Smith and I share a strong and eternal bond. We met only a couple of times. The last being the funeral services for his nephew, Butchie. In 1929 my mother, Mary

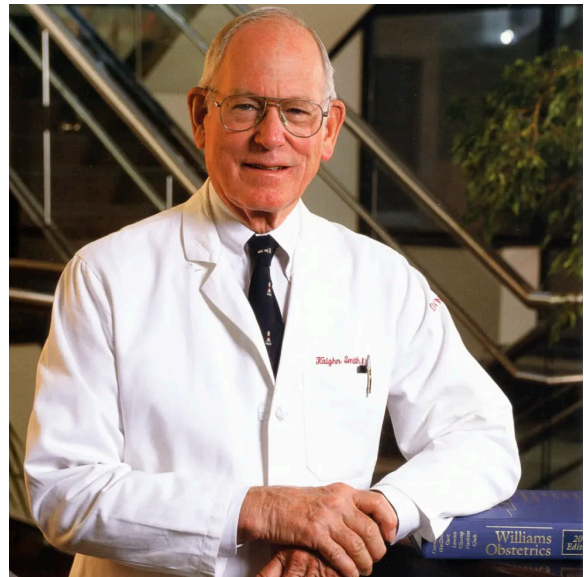
[Plant a Tree](#)

He was my gynecologist many, many years ago. I came to him for a routine checkup and he noticed I had lost weight. He asked how I was. Not great. My marriage was falling apart. I had two little girls. My parents were dead. Few financial resources. He...

[\*\*Continue Reading\*\*](#)

**Dorothy H Bedell**

October 22, 2021



**Funeral Home**

October 14, 2021

Share Obituary:

