



## Philip Barrons

January 23, 1940 - May 9, 2026

Philip Barrons age 86, of Royal Oak, Michigan passed away on May 9, 2026.

Born in East Lansing Michigan, Phil was the son of Keith Converse Barrons and Delphine Brooks Barrons. He graduated from Midland High School, Alma College and Wayne State University and went on to an esteemed career as a Professor of Humanities/Film Studies at Macomb Community College for forty-seven years.

Phil was a loving husband to Gerry and father to Greg and Molly and grandfather to Scott. He was a man of deep kindness and conviction who loved reading, writing, movies, tea and theater. Phil was a lifelong caregiver and educator. As Professor Emeritus of Humanities/Film Studies, he served as a beloved institution for thousands of students over the course of his career. So well-traveled and worldly yet entirely rooted, grounded, and confident. Phil passionately served as tour guide and manager for his college's annual sojourn to London and the surrounding English countryside.

Phil was an endless fountain of wit, improvised sounds, and recycled Monty Python gags. Often seen seated in partial shade with tea in hand and book by his side; or dressed for a Welsh pheasant shoot, gripping an empty pipe and shouldering a ceremonial walking cane.

Like his mother, he loved cooking and yearly traditions. Was a lover of animals, and like his father, attempted to speak to many by saying, "Hey chip, hey bird"

Like both parents, he sought the embrace of the garden and tended his gardens with care he gave to all of those around him. Though some would say he was a collector, he was even more a gatherer of useful things, and an endless life-hacker and DIY enthusiast.

Quite often he made himself laugh so hard he'd resemble a Hanna-Barbera cartoon character for long moments while attempting to explain his joke. Ever a man of community, he enjoyed associations, collaborations, and work all the way till the end. Whether it was his group of fellow professors, "The Royal Society Warren Annex", from way back when or the Ludington Writers Group, he was a strong pillar to lean on.

The happiness Phil provided and enjoyed in life was a testament to his worth. He built a kingdom and smiled upon it for many years. He is truly irreplaceable, absolutely singular, and his loss will continue to remind us all to be kinder, stronger, and sillier.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Gerry Barrons; his children, Greg and Molly Barrons, his grandchild, Scott Barrons; and his siblings, Bill Barrons and Dave Barrons. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sisters Jane Moore and Barbara Ismael.

His life will be celebrated daily by those who knew and loved him and in private celebrations of his life. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Phil's memory to Macomb College Scholarship Fund at [www.macomb.edu/give](http://www.macomb.edu/give) and designate " in honor of Philip Barrons" or to the Ludington Writers at [www.ludingtonwriters.org](http://www.ludingtonwriters.org) . Please share a story of Phil or leave a tribute at [www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com](http://www.SullivanFuneralDirectors.com)



# Tribute Wall

TW

“ I was a student of Phil Barrons' "Film as Art" class in the fall semester of 1991. That was the year I was looking for & bought my house in Royal Oak. I was working full-time, going to MCC part-time, & failing terribly at work/life balance. I stupidly took three (3) classes that semester - biting off much more than I could chew.

Phil & I reconnected years later when I learned he organized an annual tour "The London Experience" via MCC. As adults, my older brother, Kent turned out to be my best buddy & an awesome travel partner. Always focused on his domestic motorcycle adventures, he never had the desire to travel internationally. "Why do you want to go to these exotic foreign locations, when there's so much to do & see in the US?" he would say to me. I dragged him on one of Phil's trips & Kent got bit by the bug. Every year, Kent insisted (because of HIS work travel schedule) that I go bleary-eyed, tailgating at MCC's Cashier's Office to get us on the tour. We became repeat travelers on Phil's tour because we found more to do each year. Forget the other destinations on MY bucket list!

Sadly, Kent's retirement was cut short by a brain tumor in May 2024 (just when our travel plans were ramping up). Our last tour with Phil was pre-COVID when air travel was still tolerable. With Phil's passing, I've now lost my favorite tour guide. London will NEVER be the same for me.

I thank Phil for not flunking me in the Fall of 1991 and waking up that adventurous spirit in Kent which lead to several memorable trips to London. Should I get afflicted with Dementia, my long-term memories of those priceless experiences of travel with both Phil & Kent will bring me comfort. Thank you, Phil. I miss you.

My condolences to the entire Barrons family.

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Tina Wong - May 26 at 09:24 AM

BM

“ *He was a mentor and my Friend. I miss him.* ”

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**Barry Matthews** - May 25 at 10:25 AM

*“ Part Two*

*Whatever project I was doing at Macomb, Phil somehow showed up to support it.*

*My Columbia friends and I started printing poetry chap books, which became Ridgeway Press & Artists Collective.*

*One day Phil walked up to me in the basement of the Instructional Media Center, and handed me a stack of very beautiful goldenrod colored thick card stock for our project. That paper became the book covers for our first group book “Kitana-Po”, which also featured poetry by our dear Larry Pike.*

*Our student org, the Community Productions Club took over the Tv studio once a week and produced a hour long campus news show. Once I did a guest editorial about how just after our last production before Christmas break, the campus police cadet arrested our show announcer Joe (our only black cast member), for unpaid Detroit parking tickets. They held Joe until the Detroit police arrived and asked why the fock were they calling them about parking tickets, “Release the man you idiots”. While this was going down they went through Joes’ briefcase. When he got his briefcase back, his little 35mm vial of pot was missing (who remembers those little grey containers with the black top?).*


*The Campus Chief announced that he was taking me to court for defaming his good officers and would make sure that I never work in the TV industry.*

*I did not take the threats too seriously, plus we told nothing but the truth. But a few days later Phil stopped me in the hall, and he told me that if I had to get an attorney over this, he has already talked with other teachers, and they were prepared to raise funds for me. Above and beyond, these 12 Mile High teachers are amazing.*

*Most profoundly, I had just escaped from a plastics factory and got to Macomb really missing some essential beats, and Phil took the time and the care to help me find them.*

*### Carl Aniel*





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**CARL ANIEL** - May 25 at 01:44 AM

CA

*Macomb College friends, correction, not Columbia, sorry*

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**CARL ANIEL** - May 25 at 01:45 AM

CA

“ *Part one*

*Phil became a dear mentor as I took his Film as Art class, Room 154 ? Instructional Media Center, basement. I had shot some 8mm films before that class, but Phil was able to teach me how to examine a film as a story that can tell the truths about our existence. I was a student worker at Macombs Media Center (\$2.10 per hour). So between classes and work, and the CPC video group and the student senate I was on campus day and night.*

*(Yes, I was one of the “Student Senators Netted in Sunday Campus Booze Bust”. I still think that is a great headline!).*

*I got to know so many wonderful teachers, pushing film projectors and tvs through the tunnels to all their classrooms. I also witnessed the special camaraderie among these exceptionally gifted and dedicated teachers, Jim Jacobs, Art Ritas, Bill Cox, Judy White, Lou Baltman, Jim Pallas, David Barr, Larry Pike, and more.*

*Phil got me paying side gigs as a projectionist at various film festivals and events. Phil once hired me to paint his garage, but that’s too long of a story for here.*

*Phil showed our class “Johnny Got His Gun” and that is when I first learned that “movies” were not just to accompany popcorn.*

*### Carl Aniel (Madison)*

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**Carl Aniel** - May 25 at 01:23 AM

KH

“ I was a first year student at Macomb in September 1970. The school was trying a program where four professors worked together. My instructors were Phil Barrons, Jim Jacobs, Art Ritas, and Tim Hannert. All four were excellent but I really enjoyed Phil's film class. I also recall his wearing dashikis. 56 years later I still look on that year fondly. Ken Hafeli, Westland

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**Kenneth G Hafeli** - May 24 at 08:21 PM

DR

“ Started in the same year at Macomb— always admired his intelligence and good humor Dale Rustoni

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**Dale Rustoni** - May 24 at 07:42 AM

JJ

“ I met Phil in 1968 and we worked together at Macomb for the next 50 years. He was a Renaissance person: a great instructor, a superb chef, always up on current events and an astute critic of books and movies. But most of all he was a creator of community. He organized a group of us who taught at Macomb into an ongoing social network which he named Royal Society of Warren Annex. He was our Fleet Commander who led our various annual activities— which not only held us together as friends, but allowed us to become great teachers contributing to the success of thousands of Macomb students. He enriched our lives and those around him. We will miss him.  
Jim Jacobs

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**Jim Jacobs** - May 23 at 10:25 AM

SW

“ Although I did not know Phil well, I thought I did because of all the hilarious stories Gerry shared about him at our NOW slumber parties & get togethers! All of your family has warm memories about Phil. Thanks for sharing some of them. My thoughts are with you. My heart is heavy for you ❤️ ☐

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**Sue Wagner** - May 22 at 03:51 PM

IA

“ In thank s for the life of Philip Barrons. With sympathy from the Royal Society Warren Annex planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Philip Barrons.

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**In thank s for the life of Philip Barrons. With sympathy from the Royal Society Warren Annex** - May 22 at 11:12 AM