



## Jay L. Mack

May 12, 1933 - January 5, 2022

On January 5 2022, Jay L. Mack passed away peacefully at home having spent time with each of his children in his last days. Born in 1933 to Eddie and Marion Mack and into a legacy of dance, he was raised in Port Jervis, New York beside his two brothers Edward and Gene. After high school, he served in the army and was honorably discharged as a sergeant in 1955. He continued as a dance instructor and while enjoying a job as a social director at the Sagamore, he met the love of his life, Jacqueline Masson and they married in 1956. They settled into a home in Matamoras, Pennsylvania and raised three children Jay, Suzette and Paul.

Jay devoted his life to dance but occasionally ventured into other fields owning a dry cleaner, a bar/disco, selling real estate and insurance and even acting as a golf pro! Though he enjoyed success in these, he always circled back to his passion and true gifting, dance. He specialized in tap dancing but taught all forms of dance including ballet, jazz, acrobatic, ballroom, disco, country and even offered a variety of exercise classes as the fads came and went. He had an in-home studio and also traveled weekly to New York City where he taught tap to instructors and Broadway bound children.

Jay had a heart for those in need, those in trouble and those who were vulnerable with special needs. Many people brought their children to him knowing he had great success with children struggling with physical, emotional and intellectual issues. He had a way of connecting with and helping them move beyond what others believed possible. Outside of his studio, he advocated for them with the school system, their doctors, their families and often helped them receive specialized training and obtain employment.

His heart of service was also reflected through his participation in The Lions Club, The Elks, The Salvation Army, The Cub Scouts, the Catholic Church and The American Legion. The honors, accolades and awards he earned in these arenas are too plentiful to list.

Jay was well loved and well known. Even when in an airport or foreign city someone would inevitably shout out "Hey, Jay Mack!" and fun would ensue. Jay was a man of great integrity who could be depended on to tell the truth albeit not always in a soft and fuzzy way. He was not easily swayed and knew when something wasn't right. He also sensed

what was going on within people and could engage with them on a deeper level whether they were a friend or a stranger.

Jay was a devoted husband, proud of his wife's successful career.

Eventually they retired to Florida where they enjoyed their children and grandchildren, traveled and socialized with friends. As Jackie endured a long battle with Alzheimer's disease, Jay remained ever loyal by her side until her death in October of 2020.

Jay is survived by his brothers Eddie Mack(wife Danielle) and Gene Mack (wife Carmen), his children, Jay E. Mack (wife Irene), Suzette Le Parc (wife Trish), Paul Mack (wife Patty), his grandchildren Tiffany Mack Hafler (husband Josh) Alexandra Mack, Michael and Robbie Le Parc, Nicole, Hunter and Alexa Mack and his great-grandchildren Annabelle and Lillian Hafler, and Jay Le Parc. He also leaves behind beloved nephews and nieces throughout the country.

Due to the pandemic, no public services will be held.

We, his family, request that if you are a family member, friend, ex-dance student or parent of one or just a fan, please share a story or remembrance here on this site to evidence the incredible life he lived!

If it is your preference to make a monetary donation, please do so with the Alzheimer's association.

# Comments

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“ Condolences to all whose lives were impacted by “Mr. Mack”. You will see his impact on me, as I say some words that I wish I could have said to him...

One Last Dance....

Somehow, I thought if I didn't write here, that denial would bring you back....so I could tell you, one last time, how much I appreciated your trust in me and belief in my ability. You helped give me self esteem that I didn't have.

Plus, you were a father figure to me when I needed one. And, you treated me better than my own father did. You picked me up after school, I assisted you everyday for your afternoon/evening classes.....grandma made us dinner. We took turns so the class was never left alone and you let me eat first. And when the night was over you gave me some cash and brought me home....even during that stint when I lived near the Evergreen (not really a short drive). I really wonder what I would have been getting into during that time had I not had somewhere to go everyday after school.

You brought me to Manhattan a few times to the Saturday lessons with the Broadway kids. And we played the game that you said you played when Suzette came with you....who saw the Empire State Building first. And sharing your words of wisdom in the drive....giving me exposure to a world that I never would have known if not for you.

You brought me to the dance shop in Philly and bought me my first (and only) pair of professional tap shoes and toe shoes. Because you knew there is no way my mom could afford it. (Oh how I hated those toe shoes, but I LOVED tap so much!)

Fear got me in the end, afraid I wasn't good enough to make decent money in NYC, but my soul sister, Suzette, was a huge catalyst in getting me to Manhattan, where I ultimately wanted to be.....

Was so cool to see my neighbor and your student Karl DuHoffman in the Beauty and The Beast playbill, and then look up to see him on Stage. You were truly a professional that inspired professionals.

Your expectations were high, higher than what I had for myself...higher than most had of me. I appreciated the support to reach higher and dig deeper.

And Mrs Mack showed me what it meant to be beautiful, to have class and still be down to earth.

I see the two of you dancing together in heaven....thank you letting me be a part of your family for those few years....you and your family made a huge impact on my life.



**Carol Loch** - February 08 at 07:54 PM

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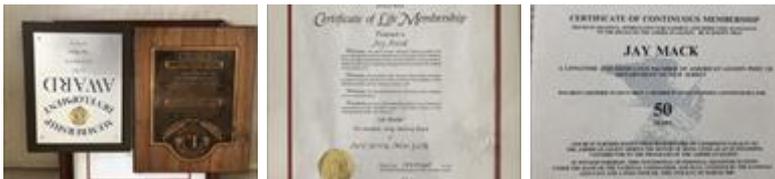
“ I am going to tell a story of Jay that I will never forget and I am reminded of it often. Suzette and I were visiting from Oregon and staying with Jay and Jackie. Jay still had his beautiful Cadillac at the time and from my perspective, he kept his car in mint condition. Suzette decided she was going to drive to dinner with some objection from Jay, but he conceded. We were only going to the club house, so Jackie and I hopped in the back and Jay took the front with Suzette. Now the speed limit in Breakers West can't be more than 25-30 mph and we weren't going any faster than that, but it was clearly faster than Jay liked his pristine Cadillac driven over speed bumps. Next thing I know Jay says J..... C..... while he's shaking his head. Now every time Suzette hits a speed bump, I give a JC shout out for Jay!

**Trish Le Parc** - January 16 at 10:06 AM

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“ 14 files added to the tribute wall



**suzette Le Parc** - January 12 at 08:02 PM



“ Suzette, Funny that I didn't know his involvement in Scouting. How funny that 2 of my 3 boys are Eagles and I was a den leader and am now an Eagle Mentor. These awards really show his extensive involvement in the community.

**Carol Loch** - February 08 at 10:16 PM

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“ Uncle Jay got me one of my first jobs. It was to play organ at St. Joseph’s in Matamoros. I was pretty green when it came to the Catholic liturgy. So Uncle Jay stood next to the organ and told me when to play each hymn. But in typical Uncle Jay fashion, instead of saying “play” or “begin” he said “Hit it!” Show biz ran through his veins, even at mass! Love you and miss you, Uncle Jay.

**Evan Mack** - January 12 at 07:48 PM

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“ Years of memories with the Macks. Those lessons taught by the man himself shall never be forgotten. For me, he was truly a mentor that will be greatly missed. Thank you for being such an important part of my life when I needed you most!!! Til we dance again.



**amber storms** - January 12 at 03:28 PM

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“ We are so fortunate to have so many great memories, whether traveling with them, celebrating holidays or just visiting on a weekend—Grandpa was always “up” to go along and always grumbled about me taking photos. 📷



**Irene Mack** - January 12 at 01:27 PM

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“ I loved learning to dance with him. He took this Tom boy and taught her how to be more elegant and lady like. We had so much fun dancing all over the area at events. Shopping for costumes, learning new dances. Meeting new girls who also shared our passion of dance, especially my titter Suzette. We just loved him so much. over the years my family and yours became the best of friends. I will always cherish the memories we all spent together. I loved Jay and Jackie as my second parents. Thanks you for everything Jay. Hope you and Jackie are dancing in heaven! Have a beer with my dad. May you Rest In Peace. Love you always, your Jay Mack dancer, second daughter, Debbie

**Debbie Eckes** - January 12 at 12:29 PM



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**Paul Mack** - January 13 at 09:03 PM

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“ My sincere condolences to Jay, Suzette, Paul and their families. Uncle Jay, as I fondly call him was my only uncle. He knew of my love of the arts and would ask me about me pursuits when we gathered at family holidays. He was the only relative to do that, and it always caught me off guard - he remembered. As a kid, one is often overlooked in favor of those who have grander achievements, or the newest addition, but he remembered. I spent a week with my PA family when I was 12 and again when I was 21. Uncle Jay and I would eat breakfast together. This is where I had a glimpse into his life. He loved his family, his work, and his community. He fielded a variety of phone calls prior to his morning class, from parades to counseling someone who's business was suffering (I only heard inside of the conversation). He loved to laugh. He loved to say Paul as if it was a complete sentence and my cousin Paul seemed to understand the context without any other words. Uncle Jay and I shared meals, grandma's tuna, and very few conversations, but when he asked a question - I knew he paid attention. As a child, or young adult, it stuck with me. Dance on Uncle Jay. I will always hear your laugh in my heart.

**Janice Shokrian** - January 12 at 11:34 AM



“ jay was a great teacher and his tap instruction led to a life of tap dancing for me- to name a few places I tap danced- Vienna, Paris, Holland, monte Carlo, the tonight show, Toronto, all over the United States including- the Kennedy center, the ahmanson, in addition his teaching helped land me on Broadway and stages as diverse as Carnegie Hall. I'll always be grateful for giving me the base and opportunity to believe that I could succeed. My whole family benefited from his teaching. Sorry for your loss he loved a rich and full life.

**karl duHoffmann** - January 12 at 12:02 PM



“ My kids, Karl, Manya and Tekla duHoffmann, took so many classes with Jay that my car went there automatically. And Johann actual began tap lessons but said it was, "too loud", and changed to ballet. Confidence, poise, thinking on their feet, never giving up AND SMILE. These things have carried through their lives. Thank you, Jay, for your time and leadership. Music and dance is an important part of our family. Hope you approve of this portion of your legacy. Lynn duHoffmann

**Lynn duHoffmann** - January 17 at 03:39 PM



“ I loved being a "Jay Mack Dancer". I have so many fun memories of performing at all the local fairs, nursing homes, etc. growing up. Wearing the costumes and forming the alley for him to walk through and open the show big! He was also very generous and used to let me hang when my parents were late to pick me up!!

**Tekla** - January 17 at 06:26 PM