



Bob Cooke

October 25, 1942 - December 20, 2025

Robert Girvan Cooke, 83, passed away peacefully on December 20, 2025 in Newnan, GA after lengthy illnesses. Bob Cooke was born to Mary and Ed Cooke in Charleston, SC on October 25, 1942. He grew up in Hawaii and attended the University of Hawaii at Manoa where he received his bachelor's degree in Hotel, Motel & Restaurant Management in 1968. Bob proudly served in the United States Air Force (1960 - 1964), Southern Air Command (SAC) stationed in Altus, OK as a jet engine mechanic working on B-52s, Pratt & Whitney J57 engines, GE J79 engines, and KC135 planes and refueling tankers during the Vietnam War.

Bob joined Pan American World Airways as Lead Service Manager (1971 - 1973) and was President of the Airline Interline Club. He joined Hawaiian Airlines as Regional Sales Director, Chicago (1973 - 1989), covering the Midwest and Southeastern Markets. From 1990 - 1997, Bob was President/Owner of Robert Cooke Associates, Atlanta, an international multiline company representing clients including airlines, luxury hotels, and resorts with clients in the US, Bermuda, and the UK.

Bob owned several other travel related companies including the RGC Group, Atlanta (2007 - 2021), a marketing group that assisted companies focused on Southeast USA travel marketing. Having a spirit of adventure, he traveled the world extensively and used those experiences and thrived on designing once-

in-a-lifetime trips for his clients. He established East Cobb Travel Vacations (2013 - 2021), a full-service travel company specializing in deluxe cruises and worldwide tours. He also established RC Travel Vacations, a travel agency focusing on international cruises. From 1997 to 2008, Bob was an Auditor for Airline Reporting Corporation (ARC) and audited travel industry businesses for air & land vacation bookings for fraud prevention.

For over 50 years, Bob received many business accolades and testimonials for his work. As one good friend said, "He was a mentor to many and a leader in the travel industry. Bob Cooke has always been a life guide to me and so many others who knew him." Bob was a quick witted, generous, and deeply caring man who loved his family. He enjoyed old Westerns, jigsaw puzzles, and dancing with Linda while wearing his tuxedo.

Bob served his community wherever he lived and worked. As a member of SKAL International - Atlanta (1981 - 2023), an organization of senior travel industry executives throughout the world, he was SKAL - Atlanta President in 1992 and 2006. In 2008, he received the organization's first Lifetime Achievement Award. Bob was also a member of the East Cobb Business Association (2017 - 2021). As a member of the East Cobb Rotary Club (2010 - 2021), he was a board member and was the club's Organization & Hospitality Coordinator. He received the East Cobb Rotarian of the Year award for 2015-2016. After moving to Newnan, Bob became a member of the Newnan Rotary Club (2021 - 2025).

Volunteering for many organizations and entities gave Bob immense pleasure and a God-given purpose for his life. Organizations he worked with included Young SKAL scholarships and mentorship; Rotary sponsored events including fundraising for the American Cancer Society - Team Leader; Meals on Wheels; and efforts benefitting Cobb County Schools and shelters.

In 2008, Bob married his beloved Linda Thomas from Newnan, GA. They had met five years earlier in Sunday School Class at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, GA. They enjoyed traveling, entertaining friends, going to Atlanta Braves games, church activities, and spoiling their Pekinese, Joee.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, Mary and Ed Cooke. He is survived by his wife, Linda; his sister, Patricia Cooke Watkins; his nieces, Allison Watkins and Lindsey Watkins Snider (Travis); his great-niece, Malia Snider; his great-nephew, Aiden Snider; his sister-in-law, Rita Thomas Melville; his brother-in-law, Rick Melville; his nephew, Jonathan Melville (Liz); his great-nieces, Nora Melville and Quinn Melville; and his great-nephew, Wesley Melville. He is greatly missed by Lily Scarlet, his devoted mini Goldendoodle.

Bob and Linda are blessed to have caring family members and friends, particularly at First Baptist Church of Newnan and at the Wesley Woods Senior Living Community. The family is especially grateful for the care he received at Wesley Woods Skilled Nursing, Functional Pathways Rehab & Therapy, and Empyrean Hospice.

Condolences may be expressed by visiting www.mckoon.com. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the First Baptist Church Newnan/Coweta Pregnancy Services and First Baptist Church AO (Alpha Omega) House which provides clothing and meals to the needy.

Private inurnment services will be at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Newnan.

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory, 770-253-4580

Tribute Wall

JM

“ I have known Bob for many years through SKAL Atlanta. Bob was always so professional, so positive and engaging. He will be missed by many, especially SKAL members in Atlanta. My deepest condolences to his family.

Janis McMullen - January 15 at 04:47 PM

CD

“ Robert was not only a leader in the travel industry, but dedicated in assisting new comers in the travel industry. He always had a good word for everyone! I do have a FOND MEMORY OF BOB!

Clement Desaulniers - December 27, 2025 at 04:31 AM

RW

“ In 1988 , as a new Atlanta Skal transferee from the Tallahassee, FL Skal Club, Bob was very gracious in assisting me with my newly conceived “boot-strapping” RW Associates, tourism marketing company. With a group of Swiss regional destinations and Swiss regional Engadine Airline as clients, Bob participated in one of my Swiss fam trips to St. Moritz and Zürich. On the Glacier Express train ride to St. Moritz that bottle of vodka got emptied and the St. Moritz Tourist Director had to pull us out of our hotel hot tub to attend the opening dinner in the 5 -star opulent Carlton Hotel where we were already late for.

Another example of Bob’s help was with his Hawaii Hotel connections & arranged my Maui hotel stay with travel industry reduction while attending the annual USA Tour Operator Association December meeting.

Bob was of course a stalwart Skalle and at Atlanta meetings and functions things ran by the Skal Code. When Bob was presiding, if you didn’t wear your Skal pin, you paid the \$ fine. As I recall, Bob was instrumental in making the Atlanta 50th Anniversary, April 20, 2005, function a fine formal, tux & white clothed chairs, affair. The reason I still can remember is because of the commemorative crystal paperweight Bob encouraged the Club to have, has a special place on my desk.

While thinking of these & other of Bob Cooke encounter highlights, a smile crosses my face as we always enjoyed a fun and amiable time together.

René Welti
1988 to 2010 Atlanta Skallee

Rene Welti - December 26, 2025 at 08:13 PM

CD

Real nice photo of Bob!

Clement Desaulniers - January 17 at 03:30 AM

TK

“ *Bob was a great man. He knew the airline & travel business like no one else & assisted & guided so many of us that worked in the business. He also helped so many people with their travels. He was like a big brother to me influencing me tremendously & guiding me in life in general. He will be missed but never forgotten....*

Terry H. Kingery - December 26, 2025 at 06:53 PM