

Broker to celebrities dead at the age of 94

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A yacht broker who sold boats worldwide, including Howard Hughes' Southern Cross, died shortly after being hit by an automobile in front of his City Island, N.Y., home.

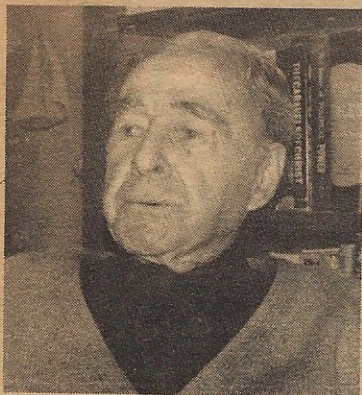
Gerald W. Ford, 94, died in the hospital 36 hours after being struck Oct. 17, succumbing to multiple injuries he suffered in the accident.

"He was one of the foremost yacht brokers in the world," said his niece, Dorothy Bohanna. He reportedly dealt with celebrities and such yachtsmen as Harold Whitney, Payne Whitney and J.P. Morgan.

Mr. Ford had sailed since he was 10, and he opened his first yacht brokerage, Gerald W. Ford Agency, in New Rochelle, N.Y., at age 16.

Two years later, he had moved his business to New York City, where he opened an office in the Chrysler Building on 42nd Street. He eventually opened an office on City Island, where he remained until his death. He retired from the brokerage business in 1976.

Mr. Ford had raced sailboats all over the East Coast. According to Bohanna, his last



JOAN NILON PHOTO

Gerald W. Ford.

race was a seniors race in Newport, R.I., about five years ago. She said he and his crew came in second with his classic 12 Meter Nyala.

He sold Nyala, the first 12 Meter designed by Sparkman and Stephens, in 1981 after owning and racing the boat for 30 years. Nyala was built at the Henry B. Nevins Yard on City Island in 1937.

Bohanna said that he had been in good health before the accident. "The day before he was hit, he was putting a tarpaulin on his boat," she said.