Robert “Bob” Guillard was an icon in all senses of the word. Many tributes to him have been and will be written (see Wikfors 1996, Anderson 2011, Sunda 2017). This is but a brief overview of a life very well-lived and shared, with contributions from colleagues and friends.

Born in New York City on February 5, 1921, Bob’s love for the natural environment was firmly established during his time with his grandparents in Stonington, Connecticut. An early scholar, Bob completed grammar school in 7 years, graduated from Townsend Harris High School in New York City in 3 years, and earned a B.S. in physics (City College New York) at the age of 20. Bob was hired by the U.S. Navy to install and maintain antimagnetic mine equipment. He continued to pursue course work in the evenings and taught at New York University and CCNY. During this time, he was smitten by a botany professor and decided that he wanted to become a “naturalist.” He went to Yale in 1949 and received a Master’s degree (1951) en route to his Ph.D. (1954) under the tutelage of G. Evelyn Hutchinson. Soon after, he was awarded a summer fellowship to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute—he changed fields from botany to oceanography. After a short period in Hawaii, Bob was hired by the U.S. Bureau of Commercial Fisheries Marine Laboratory in Milford, CT, where he was challenged by Victor Loosanoff with the task of “figuring out how to grow oysters.” As Bob recounted it, his first thought was that the little oysters would need to be fed and he reasoned that they were partial to what was in the water column. That was when he began isolating phytoplankton and developing the techniques to culture them in volume. His first publication was in the *Proceedings of the National Shellfisheries Association*, and it launched shellfish aquaculture as we know it today—the path to f/2 was being laid. The first paper demonstrated that individual phytoplankton isolates differed in their nutritional value to oysters, thereby establishing the foundation for “the Milford Method” of feeding hatchery seed of shellfish selected strains of microalgae.