

MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR EGBERT WALKER

Egbert Walker (1899-1991) was a beloved member of Adelphi Friends Meeting and a resident of Friends House, Sandy Spring, Maryland, during the last years of his life.

An indomitable spirit and intellect infused his polio damaged body and with his amazing courage and energy enabled him to go to China as a young B.A. degree-holding botanist from the University Michigan. He taught botany in China for four years and then returned to do a Master's at the University of Wisconsin and later PhD at Johns Hopkins University. He authored two scholarly texts. The first, a bibliography of Eastern Asiatic botany, and the second on the flora of Okinawa. Both, published by Harvard University Press, are still the benchmarks in their fields. He a, until his retirement a botanist at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Children were always an important part of his life. He is fondly remembered by the scores of children who worked and played with him at Adelphi and at Sea Cairn in Maine. All it would take was an inquisitive grandchild's, "Look at what I found in the forest, Grandpa," and out would come the grand microscope and the careful lesson about the place this particular insect or plant played in the ecosystem. The bonding was done and future samples reverence for life were assured.

Because he enjoyed making and fixing things and in order to overcome his handicaps, Egbert developed a modern shop in his home in Takoma Park, at Sea Cairn, and finally at Sandy Spring with all kinds of ingenious jigs that allowed a one-handed person to operate safely both hand and power tools. Because he collected filed not just botanical data but also nuts, screws, bolts, the flotsam and jetsam of the sea, he always had the material to fix almost anything about the house or cabin and to provide young builders with the material of invention.

With his beloved wife Dorothy, he marked out the trails at Sea Cairn to enable the forest to regrow naturally after a disastrous forest fire. Additionally, as members of the Appalachian Trail Club, they both assured that many miles of the Appalachian Trail would be protected as well.

Egbert was known for his addiction to sea tales, read on the rocks over a smoky campfire to the music of a changing but ceaseless tide; his sense of humor, soft ice cream, and his killer instinct at the card game, Flinch.

Egbert is survived by his wife Dorothy, daughter Jeanne, and grandchildren - Kevin, David, and Cynthia Houghton and Jody and Jonathan Lichtig.

Harold B. Confer - approved July 1991