



Knotts, Walter E. HAVERTOWN, Pa. Walter E. Knotts, age 91, World War II veteran and Professor Emeritus of English at the University at Albany, SUNY, died in his sleep on February 23, 2013 in Pennsylvania. Born in Victoria, British Columbia on May 31, 1921, Dr. Knotts was a 1939 graduate of Victoria High School and a 1943 graduate of the University of British Columbia.

After graduation, Dr. Knotts enlisted in the Canadian Army and was wounded in action in Italy in 1944. He later earned his doctoral degree in English literature from Harvard University in 1949 and began his teaching career, first at Ohio State University. Dr. Knotts began teaching English literature in 1953 at the University at Albany, State University of New York-something that he would continue to do with passion and energy until his retirement in 1991. During his tenure, Dr. Knotts became a beloved mentor to countless students, and a faculty leader. He served as the chair of the English Department during the late 1960's through the 1970's. His particular area of expertise was the satirical works of Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, and he created a new course on satire in the department. He had wide-ranging literary interests, and was always very much engaged with literature throughout his life. His friends remember his marvelous conversational skills, his generosity and kindness, and his sense of the absurd, a humorous way of looking at life. He had an amazing way of looking at life askance, which brought out his fine sense of humor-no surprise, since Swift and Pope were his mentors. One of his favorite artists was Edward Gorey, illustrator of witty images and set designs, such as the animated titles for PBS's "Mystery" series. On his bookshelf, he had a copy of Freud next to the Bible. He liked the words of the eighteenth century poet John Gay, who wrote for his own epitaph, "Life's a jest and all things show it/ I thought so once and now I know it." Dr. Knotts enjoyed tennis, poetry, literature, opera, ballet, classical music, art, pottery, and theatre. His interest in the arts often followed his scholarly interests, which centered on the eighteenth century. He was drawn to the art of Tiepolo and Goya, and the music of Haydn and Mozart, but his interests were far ranging and covered all periods. He loved all of Beethoven's compositions and Mahler's as well.

He was an avid traveler and spent most of his summers in England and Italy. He was a fine actor who appeared on stage in the Arena Theater summer productions at Page Hall, UAlbany, in the 1960's, directed by Jarka Burian. To the end of his life he admired and collected the beautiful porcelain of Victoria Crowell, of the Troy, N.Y. area.

Above all, Dr. Knotts cherished the company of his family, friends and colleagues, and their children. He will be dearly missed by all who knew him and were touched by his life. In the enduring words of Jonathan Swift, "Every man desires to live long, but no man wishes to be old." He is survived by his second cousins, Rosemary Fisk (husband Rick Fisk) and Kathy Moroney (Nicholas Moroney and Karen Moroney, third cousins) of Canada, as well as numerous fond friends, colleagues, and former students. Please see a virtual memorial for Dr. Knotts at walterknotts.muchloved.com

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