

## Eulogy for Richard P. McCormick

It was September 1939 when Dick McCormick and I first met—roughly 2/3 of a century ago. The place was the Penn campus, where Dick and I had been summoned to the office of Professor Roy Nichols, whom we were to serve as teaching assistants that year.

When I accepted a full-time job at the University of Delaware in 1942, my connection to Dick and other Philadelphia friends was weakened, but I still visited them, and I recall that Dick spent one day as a visitor on the Delaware campus during this period.

But nothing prepared me for the surprise I had in September 1944 when I learned that Dick McCormick was joining the Delaware history faculty as an instructor and was to be my office mate. It was a happy surprise.

Dick McCormick often entertained me with news of our friends in Philadelphia, or increasingly, as time passed, his adventures on the Newark, Delaware campus, where he had an apartment and ate on campus with a group of young instructors and graduate students. Dick's stories came to feature two attractive young twins from North Carolina's Women's College at Greensboro.

One day in December, Dick suggested I return to Newark on a Sunday evening to play bridge with the twins. In the past I had known Dick enjoyed poker but I had never known him to express interest in bridge. I agreed, and Dick got the girls. When we sat down to play, we cut for partners. I cut Dorothy and he cut Katheryne.

That one game started a series of events. We took the twins to a play in Wilmington and to a concert at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. Late in March they invited us to spend a weekend at their home in Baltimore. In April I proposed to Dorothy after

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walking her back to her lab from an evening of listening to Gilbert and Sullivan recordings. To my surprise, she accepted.

Dick and Katch were also surprised, but soon they were planning their own wedding. Both weddings occurred that summer. Last summer both couples celebrated 60<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. Our marriages, though we lived 100 miles apart, allowed us many opportunities to get together. We had a common interest in our children. We visited as often as we could, so our children soon knew Uncle Dick and Aunt Katch as close members of their family. Dick was an enthusiastic and loving father, grandfather, and uncle.

We spent holidays together—in Puerto Rico, Canada, Mexico and elsewhere. Dick had connections that allowed us to rent an old farmhouse on Cape Cod two summers. This began our interest in that part of the country where we both eventually had summer homes. We enjoyed the same beaches and exploring together from Dick's boat, and we always appreciated eating the bluefish that Dick caught. Dorothy and I will never forget Dick and Katch's first trip to Nantucket in their new Boston Whaler, when they lost their way coming home in a dense fog! We hosted visitors together. The McCormicks' friends became our friends.

This happy world has now suffered its first loss, with Dick's passing. The rest of us will miss his spirit, the old comradeship, but he has left us with close entanglements, ones that seem strong enough to survive the years.

John A. Munroe  
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