



Dr. Homer C. Curtis

February 3, 1917 - June 4, 2013

Homer C. Curtis, 96, retired psychoanalyst and esteemed leader in the analytic community died on June 4, 2013 at Waverly Heights in Gladwyne, PA. Before moving to Waverly in 2011, he and his wife resided in Haverford, PA for almost 60 years.

Dr. Curtis, who had a practice in Haverford and Philadelphia, trained therapists and psychoanalysts and treated patients until a few years ago. His warmth, empathy, and insightfulness made him a much sought after analyst, supervisor and teacher. He authored and presented numerous influential papers and was known for his clear and incisive thinking about psychoanalytic theory and practice. As a healer, teacher and mentor he profoundly influenced and enriched the lives of countless practitioners and patients.

Dr Curtis was born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah, the middle of 5 children of George Nathaniel Curtis and Annie Hindley Curtis, who instilled a love of learning, literature, music and art in their children. He grew up in a close knit Mormon community where he met and married his beloved wife, Enid Ashton Curtis and started his family, which eventually grew to 7 children. As a young man, he went on a Mormon mission to Germany for 2 years just prior to the start of WWII. During WWII he served in the Army Medical Corps stateside. He graduated from the University of Utah Medical School in 1944 and began his psychiatric training while a lieutenant in the Army Reserves, from 1945 until 1947. He completed his residency in psychiatry in 1950 at the Institute of Pennsylvania Hospital, where he later became senior attending psychiatrist.

In his role as an educator and supervisor, Dr. Curtis trained generations of clinicians. He held positions as professor of psychiatry at Hahnemann Medical College and adjunct professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. He was a training and supervising analyst at the Institute of the Philadelphia Association for Psychoanalysis and, later, at the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

Always a persuasive consensus builder, Dr Curtis was extremely active in various committees and working groups for local, national and international psychoanalytic organizations. He was president of the Philadelphia Association for Psychoanalysis from 1970 to 1972 and president of the American Psychoanalytic Association from 1988 to 1990. In the late 1990's, he played a key role in forging an alliance between the two major psychoanalytic institutes (and factions) in Philadelphia in order to establish the Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

Dr. Curtis was always at the forefront of analytic training issues and worked tirelessly to keep psychoanalysis a rich and vital field. Prior to his presidency at the APA, he chaired the Committee on Prerequisites for Training. Counter to the stereotype of elitism in psychoanalysis, he was a progressive advocate for opening up analytic training to non-physicians in order to deepen the ranks of psychoanalytic candidates and strengthen psychoanalysis as a whole. In 1990 he founded the Russian American Education Exchange to revitalize and advance the training and practice of psychoanalysis in Russia. He co-founded the Euro-American Psychoanalytic Clinical Conference in 1989. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Philadelphia Psychiatric Society in 1997.

A man of brilliant intellect and prodigious contributions, he nevertheless was a very modest and down-to-earth person. He was open-minded and open-hearted. He exuded wisdom and kindness. A man for all seasons, his interests ranged from sports to gardening and from art to opera to hiking and white water rafting. He had a deep love of nature and music. He loved to travel with his wife, and they journeyed to many beautiful corners of the globe.

Most importantly, he cherished his time with his extensive family of seven children, fifteen grandchildren, and fifteen great grandchildren. He delighted in watching children grow and develop and express their unique personalities. He always took time to listen to all the voices in the family no matter how young or old and no matter what their point of view. His quiet strength, thoughtfulness, and non-judgmental attitude touched all who came into contact with him, and people unfailingly came away feeling encouraged or supported and certain they mattered.

Surviving are his wife Enid; children Kathryn (Jack) Christensen, John (Susan), Paul (Bernadette), Carolyn (Ron Richman), Deborah, and Scott (Jeanne) Curtis; fifteen grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren. He was predeceased by his son Richard, who died December 18, 2011 of esophageal cancer. Dr Curtis' wish is to have memorial donations made to "Rick's Run", benefiting esophageal cancer research, sent to the attention of Judith Curtis, 42 Plymouth Rd., Springfield, PA 19064.

There will be a private family observance on Father's Day, June 16. A memorial service will be held at a date to be announced.

Tribute Wall



“ Dear Curtis Family,

I offer my deeply felt and sincere condolences on your loss.

I had the good fortune and privilege to have Dr. Curtis as my psychoanalyst for 5 years, and then later as my psychotherapist until just a few years ago. His essential goodness and deep humanity were reflected in kind concern, compassion, and genuine warmth. When with him, he was always there with me empathetically, and together we easily entered into a most productive “groove,” as he facilitated my process. His challenges were always gentle, and interpretations spot on. His concision clarified what had been for me murky, anxious, fearful, sad, and/or conflicted.

It should not surprise you to know that your husband/father/grandfather/great grandfather was a very important person in my life. I can only imagine how extremely important he was to you.

In a strange bit of serendipity, the Associated Press report of my grandmother’s death was juxtaposed to his obituary in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Over the years, I would occasionally speak of her, and he seemed to have a keen interest in hearing about her as a very old person with an exceptionally sharp mind.

Please do let me know when you schedule a memorial service.

Most sincerely,

Steve##imported-begin##STEPHEN E. LEVICK, M.D.##imported-end##

June 27, 2013 at 11:59 AM



“ Enid -
*I just read about Homer's passing away.
He was a wonderful person and was loved and respected by all.
My thoughts are with you at this time.
Fondly,*

*Dorothy Graff Kardon##imported-begin##Dorothy GRAFF
Kardon##imported-end##*

June 19, 2013 at 01:34 PM



“ So sorry to learn of your father's passing, he was a wonderful man
whose caring nature and powerful intellect were accurately captured
in the nice write up in the paper. My family were next door
neighbors on Brentford Road for over 20 years.

My sympathies to the whole family.

*Kind regards. Gary Madeira##imported-begin##Gary
Madeira##imported-end##*

June 17, 2013 at 06:23 PM



“ I knew Homer as a fellow member of the Institute of Pennsylvania
Hospital medical staff. His write up both on this site and published in
the Inquirer says it all. While he was one of my preceptor during my
residency, I also enjoyed our occasional shared lunches in our
hospital cafeteria where he told me many stories of his Utah
summer vacations riding jeeps in the nearby mountains. He was a
special man indeed. I am grateful to have known him. Peter
Bloom##imported-begin##Peter B. Bloom, MD##imported-end##

June 17, 2013 at 11:48 AM



“ My condolences to the Family and my former Gladwyne Elementary classmate Carolyn. Dr. Curtis was an extraordinary man who touched the lives of so many people.##imported-begin##Linda Tabas Stempel##imported-end##

June 17, 2013 at 08:39 AM



“ Please accept my condolences on the loss of your dear loved one. Take comfort in knowing that our Creator will soon remove all pain, suffering, sorrow, and death forever! May this promise help you gain the strength and inner peace to cope with the days ahead. Revelation 21:3,4 Philippians 4:13##imported-begin##D. Johnson##imported-end##

June 16, 2013 at 11:25 PM