



Robert Elder Forster II MD

December 23, 1919 - September 19, 2021

Robert Elder Forster II MD of Quadrangle, 3300 Darby Road, Haverford, PA, died peacefully at home, at the age of 101 on September 19, 2021. He was born December 23, 1919, in St. Davids, Pennsylvania, to John Montgomery Forster and Gladys Marguerite Jameson Forster. He graduated from Radnor High School, attended the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale College, BS, 1941, and received his MD from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1943. He did a year of internship at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, in Boston, MA. He subsequently spent two years as a captain in the Quartermaster Corps in the Climatic Research Laboratory in Lawrence, MA. He took a postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Physiology at Harvard for 2 years, when he was recruited by Julius J. Comroe, MD to work in the Department of Physiology, Graduate Division of the School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, in 1951. He stayed at Penn for the rest of his career and rose to be Chairman of the Department of Physiology, Graduate Division, in 1959. In 1970, he became Chairman of the entire Department of Physiology until his mandatory retirement in 1990. He was a leading respiratory physiologist of his day. His research interests included blood flow, gas exchange, alveolar ventilation, carbon dioxide metabolism, and carbonic anhydrases. He had an active NIH grant until he was 85 years old. He and Dr. Comroe wrote *The Lung*, in 1956, that subsequently went to three editions. He was a member of an advisory committee to NASA that had recommended against using 100% oxygen during tests on the ground prior to the Apollo 1

fire in 1967. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1973 and won a Von Humbolt Fellowship in 1993, allowing him to spend a year in Hannover, Germany. He was member of the Society of General Physiologists, the Biophysical Society, the American Physiological Society, of which he was the 39th president from 1966-1967, and the American Society for Clinical Investigation.

Robert Forster played tennis weekly for the majority of his life at the Merion Cricket Club during the winter and at the Duxbury Yacht Club during the summer. He also loved to sail; his first boat was a ketch, named the Tyche, and the second a sloop, named the Old Cove. He married the love of his life, whom he met on a blind date, Elizabeth Hilbert Day, in 1947, who preceded him in death.

He is survived by his four children, Julia Bacon Forster, Jameson Forster, John Montgomery Forster V, and Elizabeth (Babs) Forster Camerota, 9 grandchildren (Rebecca Forster Marco, Katharine Henley Forster, Sarah Jameson Marsinelli, Moses Day Forster, Jonathan Brownlee Lau, Maeve Elizabeth Forster, Robert Montgomery Caskie Forster, Christopher Andrew Camerota, and Elizabeth Day Camerota) and 3 great grandchildren (Orlando Benjamin Forster, Isabella Andersson Marco, and Lewis Joseph Marsinelli).

His life will be celebrated at the Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, PA on Saturday November 13, 2021 at 11 am. The service will be livestreamed on www.theredeemer.org. He will be interred next to his wife in Duxbury, MA. He will be sorely missed by all.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a gift to Penn Medicine's Department of Physiology in Honor of Dr. Robert E. Forster II. Checks can be made out to "The Trustees of the University of PA – Physiology" and in comment section add "In Honor of Dr. Robert E. Forster II" and mailed: c/o Andrew Bellet, 3535

Market Street, Suite 750, Philadelphia, PA 19104. You can also call 215-573-0548 to make a gift over the phone.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV **13**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Church of The Redeemer
230 Pennswood Road
Bryn Mawr, PA