

In Celebration of
the Life of

Richard F Watt

July 13, 1917 – November 30, 2010

The University Club of Chicago
Michigan Room
January 30, 2011
10:30 am

In Memoriam - Recollections

Opening Meditation

Piano Sonata No.2 in B flat minor, Op. 35, Trio from the 3rd mvt
F. Chopin

Douglas F. Watt

Hillary Watt Sontag

Interlude

Piano Trio in E flat major, D. 897, Op. 148, 1st main theme
F. Schubert

Robert Nichols

Gilda Parrella

Interlude

Piano Trio in E flat major, D. 897, Op. 148, 2nd main theme
F. Schubert

Eleanor Nicholson

Emily Teeter

Interlude

Piano Trio in E flat major, D. 897, Op. 148, 3rd main theme
F. Schubert

Alan Watt

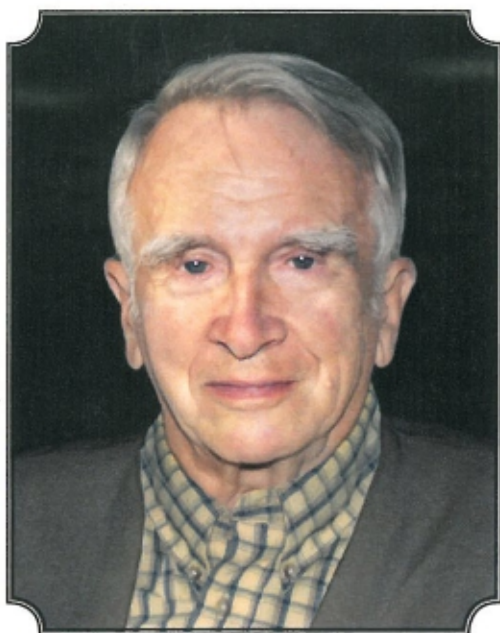
Closing Meditation

The Flower Duet from Lakmé
L. Delibes

*We invite you to stay for the Celebration Reception
to share your memories and stories.*

Richard Frye Watt (1917 – 2010)

Son of pioneering family, Rhodes Scholar, attorney, and lifelong advocate for the under-privileged, the under-represented, and the overlooked.



Early Life and Family

Born July 13, 1917, the last of three sons to Paul H. Watt (1875 - 1938) and Roberta Gertrude (Frye) Watt (1875 – 1963).

Mother, Roberta (Frye) Watt, was the granddaughter of Arthur A. Denny and Mary Denny, one of the founding families of Seattle who landed in Puget Sound on November 13, 1851.

Father, Paul Watt, came from Chillicothe, OH and after college graduation left to become part of the Alaskan gold rush, eventually managing the “Cripple River Mining Company” for two years

before joining the Miners and Merchants Bank as an officer. Paul settled in Seattle in 1909 and married Roberta Frye in 1911.

Married in January 1942 to Mary Jane Stevenson (1916 – 1987), a graduate of the University of Chicago. Had three children: son Douglas (1950 -), son Alan (1951 -), and daughter Roberta (1954 – 1977). Divorced in 1971. Married in August 1972 to Sherry Bordorf Goodman (1927 – 2005).

Education & Academic Honors

Graduated from the University of Washington in Seattle, *magna cum laude*, with a B.A. in political science in 1937. President of Phi Gamma Delta fraternity in 1936-1937. Phi Beta Kappa. Attended the Third Japan-American Student Conference in Japan in 1937. Elected Chairman and in that capacity helped organize the Fourth Conference held at Stanford University in the summer of 1937.

Selected Rhodes Scholar (Washington) at the end of 1936 and attended Corpus Christi College, Oxford, from October 1937 to June 1939. Received a First Class in final honors schools in PPE (philosophy, politics, and economics). Favorite tutors were Denis Brogan and G. G. H. Cole. During school vacations traveled in France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Norway, and the USSR. After completing studies at Oxford, went to Sweden to complete a final year learning Swedish and studying the Swedish economic system. However, that plan was interrupted by the outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939. Final M.A. degree was granted by Oxford in 1944 (delayed due to the war).

Returned to the United States in 1939 and entered the University of Chicago Law School. Received an LL.B degree in the spring of 1942. Co-Editor-in-Chief of the University of Chicago Law Review in 1941-1942.

Military Service

Drafted in April 1942 immediately following law school graduation. After basic training and then Officer Candidate School, commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Served at the Erie Proving Grounds in Ohio and at the Chicago Ordinance District until accepted by the OSS in the spring of 1944. Sailed to London, England, in May 1944 and worked for several branches of SI (Secret Intelligence). Commanded a small OSS detachment in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland, and Germany from August 1944 until December 1945. Awarded the Bronze Star and Croix de Guerre. Discharged with the rank of Major in early 1946.

Legal Career

Admitted to Illinois bar in 1942; U.S. Supreme Court bar in 1948.

Returned to Chicago in the spring of 1946 and worked as an attorney at the Chicago Housing Authority for about six months under Executive Director Elizabeth Wood. Taught Agency, Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, and Civil Procedure at the University of Chicago Law School starting in the fall of 1946. Entered the practice of Law in 1948, first as a sole practitioner and then as a partner in a new firm organized with Edward J. Fruchtman (1912 - 1957) and Eugene Cotton (1914 - 2008). The firm began as Cotton, Fruchtman & Watt and eventually became Cotton, Watt, Jones & King after several partner and name changes.

The firm's activities included a substantial amount of litigation and a number of his cases ended in Courts of Appeals and the Supreme Court. Retired from practice in 1995.

US Supreme Court Cases

MacDougall v. Green, 335 U.S. 281 (1948), argued October 18, 1948; decided October 21, 1948 (lost). The disputed issue was ballot access for Henry Wallace and the Progressive Party in the 1948 election. This decision was reversed 21 years later (below).

Harisiades v. Shaughnessy, 342 U.S. 580 (1952), argued December 5, 1951; decided March 10, 1952 (lost). This case concerned an attempt to deport Greek-born communists who had resided for many years in the US.

Local Union No. 721, United Packinghouse, Food & Allied Workers, AFL-CIO v. Needham Packing Co., 376 US 247, argued February 20, 1964; decided March 9, 1964 (won).

Surowitz v. Hilton Hotels Corp., 383 U.S. 363, argued Jan 20, 1966; decided March 7, 1966; Rehearing denied April 18, 1966 (won). This case established the right of shareholders to seek redress in the courts for abuses by corporate officers and directors.

Moore v. Ogilvie, 394 US 814, argued March 27, 1969, decided May 5, 1969 (won; reversed *MacDougall v. Green*).

Professional Associations

Chicago Bar Association, Chicago Council of Lawyers, American Civil Liberties Union.

Retirement

In the last decade of law practice and years following retirement traveled extensively with his wife Sherry. Destinations included France, Greece, Turkey, Nepal, China, Africa, Guatemala, mostly centered around sites with significant ancient ruins. Continued to enjoy his passion for tennis, both in Lakeside, MI and during winters in Boca Grande, FL.

Resumed study of French, attending regular classes at the Alliance Française de Chicago and practicing during trips taken to attend the French Open Tennis Tournament. An enthusiastic member and organizer of book discussion groups in Hyde Park, Lakeside, and Boca Grande, FL.

Remained active in the Rhodes Scholar Association and the Japan America Student Friendship Committee.

Richard Watt is survived by his two sons, Doug and Alan, and four grandchildren, Hilary and Christopher (Doug), and Graham and Ian (Alan).

**In lieu of flowers, contributions in
Dick's memory may be made to:**

American Friends Service Committee, 888-588-2372

Sierra Club, 415-977-5653

Oxfam America, 800-776-9326

Nature Conservancy, 800-628-6860

Unicef United States Fund, 800-367-5437

American Civil Liberties Union, 312-201-9740

We welcome your memories and testimonials.

Please send them to Alan Watt

alan.watt@pobox.com

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