

H. Duncan Rollason Jr.(1917 - 2014)

TUCSON, Ariz. - H. Duncan Rollason, Jr., 97, passed away peacefully Sunday, Nov. 30, 2014, from natural causes, at Sunrise Senior Living in Tucson, Arizona.

He was the first of four children of the Reverend Herbert Duncan Rollason and Susan Hervey (Wales) Rollason. He was born March 20, 1917, in the home of his maternal grandparents, George R. Wales and Mable H. Wales in Beverly, Massachusetts.

When he was four, his father was called to be Pastor of South Congregational Church in Middletown, Connecticut. The family moved into the parsonage, which would be home for Duncan's entire youth. He completed the first 10 years in the public school and graduated from the Northfield Mount Herman School in Massachusetts.

He studied biology in his undergraduate years at Middlebury College where he was in the college choir and glee club. As a student he maintained the college mailing list with an addressogram, which was a modern invention then. Following his graduation from Middlebury in 1939 he was awarded a graduate teaching fellowship in biology at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, where he then earned a master's degree in the subject in 1941. This was followed by further study and an honorary teaching fellowship at Harvard University where he earned a master's and a doctorate in biology. During his time at Harvard University he spent a summer at Woodshole, Massachusetts, at the Marine Biological Institute where he met his wife to be, Grace Saunders Rollason (predeceased).

Following their marriage Duncan and Grace moved to Amherst, Massachusetts, in 1947 where they both became incredibly active in the academic community at both Amherst College and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Duncan was a professor of zoology at Amherst College for two years before moving on to the University of Massachusetts and later becoming dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and eventually retiring in 1985. Duncan spent his sabbatical in 1960 at the University of Arizona in Tucson, where he continued his cancer research on kangaroo rat kidneys funded by a U.S. Public Health Service Grant.

His sabbatical in Arizona marked the beginning of a 54 year enchantment with the American Southwest, bringing him and his family back to the region numerous times. From his youth and into his late adulthood, Duncan spent his summers at the family camp on Lake Dunmore near Middlebury, Vermont, where he enjoyed watching the sun set over the lake, attending his reunions at Middlebury College and welcoming family and friends into his heart and home.

Duncan was the father of two children, Mary Elizabeth "Betsy" Rollason and Herbert Duncan Rollason III (Predeceased) and is survived by his daughter, Mary Elizabeth Rollason; his brother David Rollason; his grandson H. Duncan Rollason IV; several nieces and nephews; and many dear friends.

In lieu of flowers, family requests that memorial gifts be made to Middlebury College at <http://www.middlebury.edu/giving> or 700 Exchange St. Middlebury, VT 05753.

A memorial service will be held Sunday, Dec. 27, at Casas Adobes Congregational Church in Tucson. A memorial gathering will be held in Amherst, Massachusetts, in the summer of 2015.

To sign a Guest Book, express condolences, share memories and read other obituaries, go to www.gazettenet.com/obituaries.

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