



Oscar Walter Roberts

July 20, 1935 - July 3, 2020

Walt Roberts, age 84, passed away on July 3, 2020 in Bellingham, WA. Walt was born on July 20, 1935 in Alpine, Texas to Ray and Sarah Roberts. He grew up on a ranch in Marfa, Texas, graduating from Marfa High School in 1953. After high school he earned degrees from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas; Union Theological Seminary in New York City and the University of Texas in Austin. He also served 2 years in the U.S. Army. In 1963, while working an internship at Penn State, he met and married Barbara Merritt. After being ordained, he served Presbyterian churches in Morristown, NJ and Binghamton, NY. During this time, Walt's two children, Kari (1964) and Chris (1966) were born. In 1972 Walt returned to Texas to attend the University of Texas and begin working at The Episcopal Seminary. Austin was Walt's home for almost 30 years where he worked at the LBJ Library Museum for over 20 years and taught history at Austin Community College. Some of his happiest times were spent volunteering at Jourdan Bachman Pioneer Farm, a living history museum. In retirement, Barbara and Walt moved to Chireno, Texas where they lived and helped restore several historic properties including their 1860's home. Walt went back into Christian Ministry and served the Methodist Church in Garrison, Texas and several other rural churches including McMahon's Chapel. Beginning in 2000, Barbara and Walt spent half the year in their cabin in Glacier, WA. They loved the Northwest so much that in 2014 they made Bellingham, WA their full-time home. His last six years were spent at The Willows retirement community in Bellingham. He was at

home in the community atmosphere. He was a member of Garden Street United Methodist Church.

Walt loved to be outdoors. One of his most cherished memories was climbing the Grand Tetons while working in the park for two summers during college. He cherished traveling with Barbara, his brother, Bill and sister-in-law, Suzie. He was happiest, exploring the Davis Mountains and Big Bend National Park, camping on their family property on Mount Desert Island in Maine and enjoying the mountains in Washington State. He was passionate about the arts. Walt sang in numerous choirs and played the Mountain Dulcimer. He participated in Scottish Country Dancing and he was an accomplished painter, photographer, and writer. The last few years, he finalized a book about the early ranching years in West Texas. At The Willows, he continued singing, acting, bridge, pinochle, lively conversations, and arranging flowers. He had a dry sense of humor, sharp intellect, and a gentle soul. His legacy to his grandchildren was his ability to care. He is best remembered for his genuine affection and concern for others.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara of 57 years; his brother Bill Roberts and sister-in-law, Suzie of Alpine, Texas; his two children, Kari, who lives in Grapevine, Texas with her husband Joel Dollar, and Chris who lives in Seattle with his wife Lea Woodring Roberts; his four grandchildren, Sarah Allison and husband, Joseph Allison of Fort Worth, Texas, Chelsea Dollar of Maple Falls, WA, Aedan Roberts and Ian Roberts of Seattle, WA; his two great-grandchildren, Mckinley and Kennedy Allison; and many cousins, nieces, and nephews that he enjoyed spending time with. Along with everyone else, his dog Nemo will miss him greatly.

A graveside service will take place in Alpine, Texas when we are able to safely gather.

Tribute Wall

ML

“ *What wonderful memories I have of times spent with Walt and Barbara when they lived in Austin and at their Chireno home: Hours spent talking and listening, visits to historical sites, and Walt’s delicious spinach bacon salad. He lived a full life. Engaging in widely varied activities and contributions, Walt made a positive difference wherever he went. The world is poorer without Walt and I will miss him.*

Mary Long - July 21, 2020 at 12:00 AM

AP

“ *Dear Barbara & Family—Brian and I were saddened to see the news about Walt. We have many fond memories of Walt and you—both from Pioneer Farm and ASCDS. Both of us considered him a mentor, as well as a friend. I remember him as kind, compassionate, and gracious yet with a wicked sense of ironic humor when the occasion called for it. I greatly enjoyed working with him on the Pioneer Farm newsletter, and being a dance partner at Scottish dancing. We plan on making a donation in his memory. Please accept our deepest condolences and know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers.*

Ari Pettigrew & Brian Garvey

Ari Pettigrew - July 14, 2020 at 12:00 AM