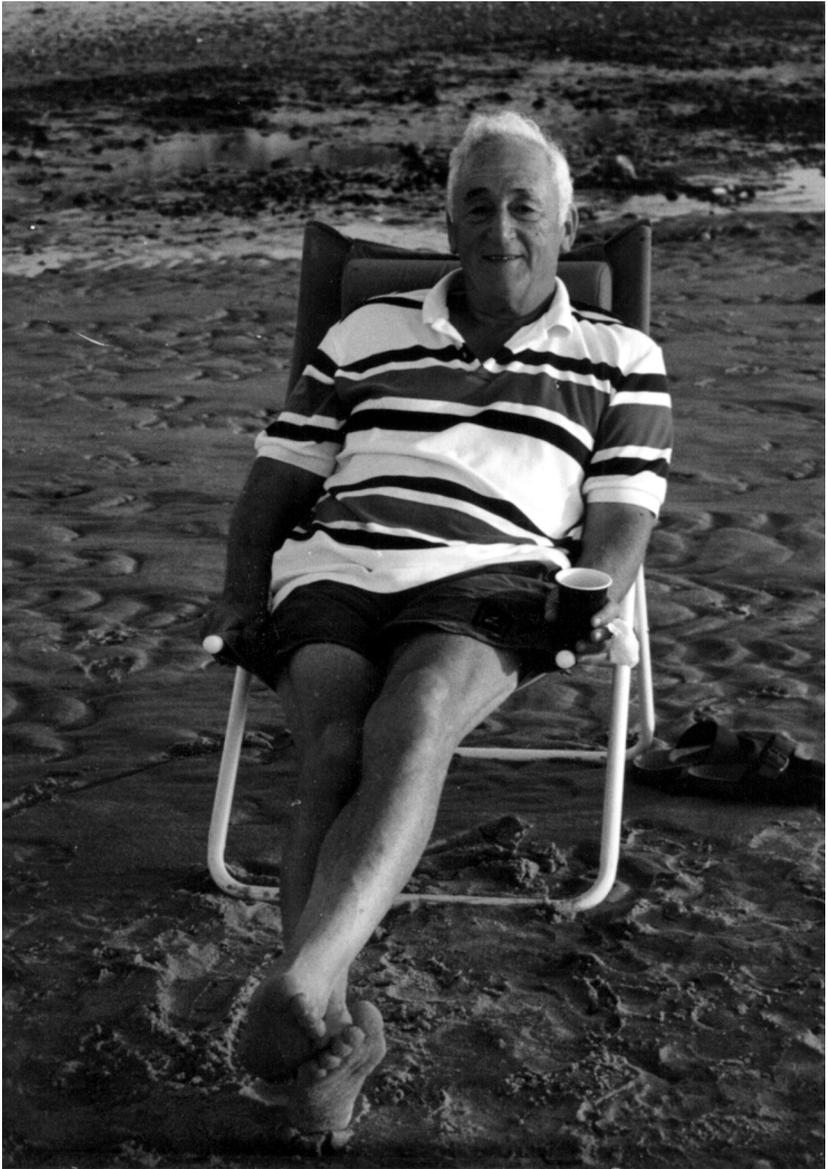


Ralph Herbert Bender

12 May 1930–30 August 1999

Chaim Reuven ben Abraham

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Some Remembrances of Ralph

George Abrams

alph and I are first cousins. We both had two sisters, but no brothers. We were close friends from the time we were little. I should correct that—Ralph could never be described as little. I used to be dropped off in Peabody to stay with Ralph on weekends and vacations. Ralph would stay with my family in Newton but most often at our summer place in Hull. We spent many summers together.

I remember Ralph when he was twelve years old. He was almost six feet tall and weighed close to 200 hundred pounds. I was two years younger, 10 years old. I was around 4½ feet tall and weighed almost 100 pounds.

That particular summer Ralph was in his wrestling or, as he called it, “pretzel” mode. I know all of Ralph’s children and grandchildren know what the word “pretzel” meant to Ralph. This meant that he was constantly trying to turn me into a “pretzel.” One day he was having particular pleasure in testing my endurance and limberness of my arms and legs. Suddenly a policeman appeared. He told us that someone had reported that a young child was being beat up by “a big man.” The policeman asked if I was o.k. and then said “do you want to bring any charges”! I hope you will understand when I say that I took an inordinately long time to respond. It was very tempting. Fortunately, I came to my senses. I told the policeman that we were just having fun. Ralph was a little gentler for a day or so after that.

Ralph and I loved fishing for flounder off our beach. We had a ten-foot rowboat, which we would take out on incoming tides, tie on to a lobster buoy (or drop anchor) about ¾ of a mile offshore and fish for flounder. We would each have two hand lines, each with spreaders and two hooks. We used worms and

clams for bait, depending on what we could get at low tide. We caught a lot of fish, more than most of you would believe.

On a good day we would catch 30 to 40 or even 50 flounders. We would then go around selling the fish: \$1 for an average size, \$2 for a larger flounder. We would clean the fish for 25¢ per fish. Some days, we would make \$25 apiece. That was a lot of money in those days.

We would call a day in which we caught 60 flounders an “all-timer” as in “this is an ‘all-time’ great day or an ‘all-time’ fishing record.” We were always trying for “all-timers.” We had a few.

I remember one day we rowed out and started fishing. I was having an “all-timer” day, catching one flounder after another and an occasional “double header”—two flounders at one time on the same line. I was so busy catching fish I hardly noticed it when Ralph pulled up the anchor. The next thing I knew he was rowing in the direction of the shore. “What are you doing, Ralph,” I shouted. “It’s an ‘all-timer.’” “Not for me,” Ralph said, “and besides I am not feeling well.” I dreamed about that “all-timer” for 50 years now. It coulda been a record.

Some 25 years later, Ralph and I decided to go fishing in Cohasset at one of our favorite places, Black Rock. We were both excited. The weather and tide were perfect. We were just carrying the boat down to the water when I felt something snap in my back. I fell to the ground in pain. Ralph came over and examined me in his best orthopedic style. “It will be o.k.,” he said. “You will probably need just a week or two of bed rest.” Then, I noticed, as I lay awkwardly on the beach, that Ralph had gone back to the boat and was pulling it down to the water. “What are you doing?” I asked. “we’re going fishing,” he said. “It feels like an ‘all-timer.’” The next thing I knew, Ralph had picked me up and placed me in the back of the boat. Now, I do not remember whether that day was an “all-timer” for Ralph

because the pain erased most of my memory. It probably was for Ralph, but I am quite sure it was not an “all-timer” for me.

Ralph was a very good football player in high school (and in college too as you will hear from the people who follow me). He played first string on the Peabody High School Class A Championship football team when he was a 13 year-old freshman. He played on three more Peabody teams, which either won the state championship or finished in the top five. Ralph played end and occasionally tackle or even fullback. In his junior year Ralph’s football team was undefeated. So too was Lynn Classical, which was coached by our first cousin, Harold Zimman. The two teams were scheduled to meet in their next-to-last game. The day before the game, the *Boston Herald* ran a full page spread on the game. In the right-hand side of the page, the *Herald* ran a picture of the Lynn Classical star, Harry Agannis. On the left-hand side was a full-length picture of Ralph shown catching a pass. The next day before 20,000 spectators in Lynn’s Manning Bowl, Ralph caught five passes including one that covered 50 yards. But, sadly Harry Agannis, Lynn Classical and cousin Harold won the game 41 to 7.

You will hear about Ralph at Harvard from two of his close friends who follow me. I do remember two more experiences that cover the Harvard period, which I would like to touch on. When Ralph was at Harvard, he played both ways on a team made up largely of World War II veterans—defensive tackle and offensive guard. He was the youngest player on the team and to this day some of his old teammates still refer to him as “the Kid.” One day I received a call from Ralph telling me that he was sending a ticket to me (I was then in my senior year at Andover) for the Harvard-Princeton football game. The ticket came two days later with a short note. “Let me know what you think of this person sitting next to you,” the note read. When I arrived at the game, I found the person sitting next to me was a Wellesley student. It was Anita.

Ralph played one of his best games until he was hurt in the third period. After the game, I went to meet Ralph and Anita. Ralph came out on crutches. He pulled me aside and asked “What do you think of her?” I said “Ralph, she’s really beautiful and nice, but Ralph, she didn’t watch the game. She was talking with her friend, Eleanor. She didn’t even see when you were carried out on a stretcher.”

Well, Ralph took my comments pretty well, and some time later that year he and Anita were engaged. That summer, Ralph called me one day and told me he wanted to have Anita pass one last test. We were going to take her fishing.

Ralph and Anita arrived on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. The boat was ready and it was not long before the three of us were on our way to one of our favorite spots about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off shore. Ralph rowed the 10-foot boat with ease while Anita and I sat on the back seat. Soon we were fishing and Anita was holding her own. Of course, she refused to bait hooks with the worms and would not take any fish she caught off of her line. But she was catching flounder along with Ralph and me.

Suddenly, the clouds turned black and we realized a summer squall was about to hit. It came fast and hard and we were in trouble. The rains were pouring down, the waves were growing enormous and we were taking water on all sides. It was then, for the first time, we realized we had only one life preserver. It was sitting at Ralph’s feet, directly in front of Anita and me. Ralph took out the oars and began rowing directly against the wind towards shore. Anita and I both had bailing cans and were trying to keep up with the water pouring over the gunwales. At one point, one of Ralph’s oars slipped—Ralph had caught what rowers call “a crab”—but he quickly righted the boat and kept us pointed dead against the wind and waves. Suddenly the squall ended. We were 10 inches deep in water. But we were, after all, safe. I remember how the three of us looked at the single life preserver for the rest of the way into shore. Each of

us probably wondered who would have gotten the only life preserver. Anita, today I can assure you that Ralph and I would have given it to you. I think.

So you can see when I think of Ralph, I think mostly about fishing and I get a good feeling. Ralph and I in recent years often talked about our fishing days and the good times we shared—and we remembered the “all-timers.” We both expressed the wish that there had been more chances to fish in recent years but the increase in commercial fishing and the dragging of the bottom with large nets had depleted the flounder stock to a level that had made flounder fishing almost impossible. Three years ago, however, new conservation laws went into effect and the flounder population was regenerating. We were beginning to gear up to a return to Black Rock and those wonderful days of the past.

But now no more. Never again an “all-timer” for the two of us. I am terribly saddened by the reality of this.

But all of my memories of our fishing days will always be happy and wonderful for me and for this I am grateful.

Yes, even the day of “the great storm” as it came to be known, for we three, Anita, Ralph and I were all catching fish before it hit—and we did after all make it safely to shore. Who knows, if the storm hadn’t come, it might have been an “all-timer” for the three of us.

Memories

A. David Mazzone

When Anita asked Phil or me to speak today, we scrambled for a good reason why we could not. And we could not come up with one except our own inadequacy in doing justice to this unique, remarkable man. So we decided to do it together because between the two of us, there is a lot of life to remember and to celebrate.

Now, there is a certain irony in this. Chief was a surgeon, he fixed bones, put things together, made people whole. Phil is a psychiatrist. I am a lawyer. Can you think of any two other professions, about which Chief, this honest, direct, say-it-like-it-is, man had more definite opinions, *not*, as you know, always favorable, except, of course, for his son, Robert.

With the exception of his birth family, George, Justice Abrams, his sister, I have probably known Chief longer than most of you. I met him in High School, my senior year and his junior year when Peabody High School and Everett High School scrimmaged each other before the season began. Our respective coaches liked to see the rich kids from Everett and the rich kids from Peabody beat on each other to get ready for the season. I did not really know him. We did not introduce each other, but I knew—we all knew the legend of Bender from Peabody.

At Harvard, I began a year earlier. Chief came in September 1947, with Phil. But he graduated in June 1950, doing in three years what we normal people did in four. I was his roommate—before you, Anita. Those were special years at Harvard, Chief was a starter on the varsity the two years he played, on offense and defense. Tough as they came, on every play, an all out effort, on the football field, as the wrestling team heavyweight and the classroom. This was a very, very smart person, even though he did not have a Phi Beta Kappa key to wave around. If

someone were to ask me today my definition of a scholar-athlete, it would be *Ralph Bender*.

Another reason those were special years was the unique blend of returning veterans from prep schools like Guadalcanal, Normandy, or Iwo Jima, with high school kids from Everett, Peabody, Andover, Milton. That mix is still alive today. Every year, we meet for a football reunion weekend, organized by Paul Lazzaro. We meet, Nick Rodis, John Coan, Wally Flynn, Sam Adams, Hal Moffie, Rocky Stone and others and revive memories of ourselves and others who were there, Kenny O'Donnell, Bobby Kennedy, Vinny Moravel, Chip Gannon. The veterans and the kids. To this day, Nick will refer to Chief as "he's just a kid."

After college we maintained a close, steady, supportive relationship. Anita and my wife were at Wellesley together. We had great tailgates; Chief saved a kid from going to jail for a long time—remember? He fixed my wife's foot; Robert was my law clerk; I consulted Andy about my cranky knees; Walter explained the mysteries of the MIT Media Lab 20 years ago and took us on a trip through Aspen, Colorado by computer.

So much to remember and celebrate. Remarkable? Yes. Why? He was not a gentle person, was he, Mel? But a caring one. He was not devoid of opinions, but they were careful and thoughtful. I could, we all could disagree, but not argue with his reasoning. I will tell you of a trip we took to England and Scotland. We got to the airport, went to the rental car agency and I picked up the keys and drove to the hotel. I put the keys down on the counter to register. Chief grabbed the keys and I did not see them for two weeks. Can you imagine him sitting in the back seat while I drove? Come to think of it, he would have made a good lawyer.

I want to tell you in closing a story he liked, but I wanted to be sure of myself, so I asked Amy if I could tell a story. And she

said, are you going to tell the skating story, because it is absolutely true.

Again, there is a certain irony in all of this because I admired Chief for a lot of reasons, but I really admired him for what I would call his “Jewishness”—his faith, his beliefs, his moral code, his convictions. And he knew why I sneaked out of our room every morning to run down to St. Paul’s for a brief prayer to keep me healthy. We were very different, but we respected each other's beliefs.

One cold winter day, we were at the Benders. The kids all wanted to go skating. Chief did not want to go; my wife, Ellie, did not want to go. So Anita and I take the kids skating—all eleven of them. And after, we go to Brigham’s for hot chocolate, and while we are there, the waitress says, “Oh, what a wonderful Catholic family—all those kids.” Remember, Amy?

Let us remember. There’s a lot to remember and a lot to celebrate.

Thank you, Anita.

Ralph Bender

Phillip J. Isenberg '51

It is September 1st and there is more than a hint of autumn in the air. Ralph, at this season I remember like yesterday how we suffered through double sessions preparing for the football season and the games which would engage so much of our energies and desires. In those brief and now distant years, I came to know you so well and to love you. Many of your teammates are here today to say farewell to you. We all admired you and over time as our friendships deepened, we became aware of your courage, loyalty and strength. I felt lucky because I played on your side. Allow me one football story of the dozens that David, Ralph and I have shared.

In September 1948, the Harvard team opened against Columbia, who brought a team to Cambridge that had in the previous year ended Army's impressive string of 33 consecutive victories. Ralph, the youngest player on our team, started at strong-side tackle for Harvard. He played against the acting Captain of the Columbia team, who was highly touted and experienced. Ralph had played against him in high school, and was clearly not intimidated in any way. In fact Ralph controlled, manhandled and dominated his counterpart all afternoon. By the end of the day, the Columbia Captain's body language showed him to be begging for mercy. Ralph never let up, and we decisively beat Columbia on that long ago day. At the end of the game, Ralph went up to congratulate and shake his hand, but this sportsmanlike gesture was refused; leaving Ralph a little bewildered and hurt. I doubted, though, that he brooded about it.

Why do I tell this tale instead of so many others? Because it demonstrates two of Ralph's most obvious characteristics: his enormous physical strength and his youthful delight in it. He was blessed in this way from an early age and from the time he

arrived at Harvard, he knew how to use these talents. But he never could understand that others could be frightened or demoralized by his power. He reveled in athletic combat and he always gave his best effort, and he expected the same from us.

His physical strength seemed to blend with all his other characteristics: his enormous pride, frankness, absolute honesty, his uncompromising moral, religious and intellectual convictions. Ralph has an immense fund of knowledge, great facility with words, unshakable opinions and ideas, deep religious faith, and strong bonds with those he cared for.

I knew Ralph only about one year before he met Anita, and from that time, they seemed to me to be as one. Their love for each other is something that I, like others, just took for granted. His pride and love for his children, never sentimental, never boastful was deeply felt and plainly expressed.

Ralph, we will miss you. But just as in your life you displayed courage and strength, we too will try to do the same. We will go on living, aided by the love we shared in knowing you, because you would want us to do just that, as you always did.



His Children's Memories

Robert, Andrew, Walter, and Amy

Dad was always a great source of information. Mel has noted that he was the only one on this side of the Atlantic who could complete an entire London *Sunday Times* crossword puzzle. There could not have been more than three books he hadn't read—everything from junk novels to philosophy. One of the last books he read was the new Dick Francis novel. Just before that, he read E.O. Wilson's *Consilience*. On this occasion, he took delight in underlining all the passages where Wilson took potshots at the social sciences.

Dad was crystal clear about his values: honesty, hard work, self-reliance, and personal responsibility. He was a devotee of Mark Twain, "Always do right, this will gratify some people and astonish the rest."

He was a good listener and a good observer of people. He didn't always agree with what he heard or like what he saw, but he made his judgments from the heart and without prejudice.

Certainly he was opinionated. Certainly he was firm. And yet, he had a warmth that was inescapable. There is not a child who didn't melt in his presence. All the grandchildren flocked to him, climbed on him, hung on him. He loved his grandchildren. Excluding meal times, he showed them remarkable patience.

Some of the grandchildren's remembrances of Papa are: Papa's whistling call; Papa's sticks; Papa's hugs and the funny "grrrr" "Papa noise" that accompanied them; Papa's holding them to the ceiling by one mighty outstretched arm; "Macy, you are a dog"; he always wanted a grandson named Max so he was thrilled by Elise and Daniel's new cat; he was the coolest grandfather because he did SCUBA diving; there was always candy in COSTCO-sized quantities "hidden" in drawers or in the

giant Oreo cookie jar; Papa always sat in a “Papa chair”; his pet names: #1, #2, #3, #4, Hugamuga, and Jessica-Messica.

Dad couldn’t always express his love of his family directly but on occasion he would let slip statements such as “I married a brilliant, beautiful woman, who has been my friend and ever interesting companion.”

Dad was a teacher and value setter for his children and grandchildren and was most proud of his relationship with his family. Each of us is somehow different, but we share his values. We each learned to speak for ourselves (and for others). We each inherited his speak-your-mind gene. We each learned to relish a debate. Dad was ready to argue, constructively, with others, too, but only with people he respected.

He was a tough guy. Many say he was the toughest guy they have ever known. Dad confided to me that he got this strength from his father. He was a giant who towered over his family and the rabbi at his Bar Mitzvah. He claimed he carried his “baby boy Bender” birth certificate during the war to convince adults that he was not yet fifteen, and was not avoiding service.

Unlike his studious children, Dad rarely had to apply himself to be a successful student. His math teaching assistant at Harvard was Tom Lehrer, yes, that Tom Lehrer. Towards the end of the semester, Dad was summoned to Lehrer’s office. For once, Dad was nervous because he had managed to skip most every class that term. Lehrer stared him up and down and then remarked: “Well, you haven’t shown up enough to be a pain in the ass. I guess I’ll give you a passing grade.”

At a very young age, he decided to take on adult responsibilities. He was becoming a parent to four children by the age of 28, while finishing medical training, then moving the family to the end of a runway on a SAC base in South Dakota. (He loved to repeat that Amy the only newborn in the nursery at Rapid City who was a Jew, not a Sioux.)

Dad had enormous hands. His hands were so big that when he was in the Air Force, they had to special-order gloves for him. When he left the service, they gave him the remainders. He used the last pair of gloves just this summer.

Dad considered his medical career as personally rewarding, in that it permitted him to “know and serve” a wide spectrum of people. His patients adored him. They saw in him not just a skilled surgeon, but a man of judgment, a man who respected them as people, and a man who took pride and care in what he did well, but one who would not step beyond the line into what he couldn’t do well. “Do no harm.”

His collection of canes is one testament to the fact that he loved to work with his hands. His surgical training brought an appreciation for having the right tool for each job. His workbench in the new cellar was littered with every shape of clamp, scissors, and blade from his old medical bag. These were augmented with the full range of Japanese saws selected from an unending pile of catalogs. We were always on the lookout for a good piece of wood that we could add to his collection.

He always worked fast. Not always neatly, but always fast. This might explain how he and Andy built a doghouse in the basement but couldn’t get it through the door.

It wasn’t too often that Dad needed one of us to tell him what to do, but it was Andy who rekindled his interest in golf. He bought Dad some clubs and “made” him play many a round. Dad, due to his hip, never did master a repeatable swing, but he could hit the ball hard. On one of his first outings with Andy, he swung so hard on a tee-shot that the head of his club snapped and flew into a water hazard. He had a hard time explaining that one to the pro when trying to get the shop to honor his warranty.

He’d never cheat at golf, but he’d use whatever advantage he could. When he couldn’t improve his own game, he’d talk to

Andy during his back swing in order to take his game down a notch or two. He knew how to push the buttons on all of us.

He pushed us each in a different way. During football games at R.L., he'd be up and down the sidelines, shouting encouragement (and criticism). He didn't only motivate us, but the entire team.

He was a friend and mentor to all of our friends, even as teenagers, he was the one parent everyone could talk to and respect. You always knew where you stood with him.

Advice to Robert when heading off to college in the 60s: "Don't sign anything." (This to a future lawyer.)

Advice to Andy when heading off to college in the 70s: "Don't lose your head over a little piece of tail."

Advice to Walter upon graduating from college: "Get a job." So Walter took his suggestion to look into this new program in the MIT School of Architecture. It is unclear how he found out about the program; it was just another example of his uncanny ability to make the right use of what he learned. In any case, on Dad's advice, Walter went to MIT, where he has stayed for the past 20 years. Of course, he still hasn't gotten a job. We can blame Dad for that!

Advice to Amy: his guidance to her cannot be recaptured in a phrase. Amy fondly recalls Dad as a listener, who could help her always to understand—though he did not necessarily agree.

When he was giving us advice, he clearly wondered if we heard him, if we got the message. In retrospect, it was clear to him that we did hear him. In writing about his life for his upcoming 50th Harvard reunion, he reflected that he had raised four self-reliant children. Dad: we got the message.

He also learned to love and respect the husband and wives of we four. He learned to see in each those qualities that drew his

children to them. He shared with Sandy her fervor to stand her ground. He shared with Wanda her real people sense. He respected Kathy's ability to get things done. He welcomed Howard's love of his family.

Dad wouldn't have been Dad without Mom. She was the one person who really knew him and continually renewed him. Just like she helped fill in the final blanks in his Sunday puzzle each week, she helped complete him each day.

Dad recently looked back at his 69 years and remarked that "I do consider myself to have been very fortunate." We feel fortunate to have had him as our Dad.

Eulogy for Ralph Bender

Rabbi Ronne Friedman

he painter and critic Richard Guggenheimer once wrote: “The quality of insight is determined by the degree of our ultimate integrity. Sound vision is the reward of maturity, and maturity is intellectual, emotional, spiritual integrity.” Anyone, indeed everyone, who knew Ralph Bender, knew first and foremost his intellect and his integrity. The testimony of his friends and family has spoken amply and eloquently of his intellectual and emotional integrity. I was privileged to share a friendship with Ralph that permitted me to appreciate his spiritual integrity as well. This aspect of Ralph was the least open to view, but certainly not the least profound. His spiritual integrity was predicated upon doubt, skepticism and, as most of you know, a cynicism that was not infrequently expressed. With Ralph, those qualities were always a means. The end, though often unstated, was a searching after truth—truth about life, truth about the world, truth about people, and his most relentless search for truth about himself. For reasons that I do not understand, but prize, Ralph never hid his vulnerability from me.

I remember in particular one very long lunch (how could there be an intimate exchange with Ralph without a good meal?) at the time that Ralph had decided that he had to retire. No one else pulled him out of the lineup—he did that himself—for he would not violate his own exceptional standards. Despite the fact that it was his decision, it was not easy and he wrestled with existential questions. Our conversation took a very philosophical turn and I asked him to speak about his regret. I expected to hear about the loss of power and privilege as a professional. Instead Ralph said: “If I had a chance to do it over again, I would have spent more time with my kids. It went by so fast and I know now that it’s what matters most.”

Last night as I sat with Anita, Robert and Sandy, Andrew and Kathy, Walter and Wanda, and Amy and Howard, and their children, Elise and Dan, Emily and Alex, and Allison and Jessica, together with George, Ralph's cousin/brother, I saw reflected the extraordinary range of Ralph's legacy. Howard recalled the image of infant Allison crawling over Ralph's (at the time) formidable belly. Each of the grandchildren shared several of his or her own special memories of Ralph. When Dan spoke of his enveloping Papa hugs, accompanied by his "heartly kind of Papa noise," the rest added their assent—Emily spoke of the security within that hug, a hug that "completely enveloped you." Jessica mentioned the Papa sticks, Ralph's famous canes, and everyone had another story to share.

The tales poured out in profusion—Ralph's secrets were on display; his idiosyncrasies were recalled with delight. Everyone had a memory of the candy stashes, of the expectations at dinner time, of the dessert contests at Thanksgiving—Ralph's candidate always won. As I listened to the stories told within Ralph's sacred circle, amidst the laughter intermingled with tears, I marveled at the fact that his four children, each so wonderfully different from one another, reflect aspects of their father, a testimony to Ralph's depth and range of interests. Andrew and Alex shared stories of golf adventures with Ralph, Alex noting that Ralph was not happy to be out-driven by his grandson. When Anita spoke of the extraordinary peace and tranquility, the spirituality that she and Ralph had discovered in SCUBA diving each year at Bonaire, Walter added—"we finally listened to him and learned to dive this year—he was right."

The medieval Jewish poet Moses Ibn Ezra once wrote: "The first virtue of wisdom is silence; the second is hearing; the third memory; and the fourth action." Ralph's legacy is great, as befits the man. His love was often communicated indirectly, his fierce pride in his children and in Anita, his wife and most intimate friend through 49 years of marriage, was often unspoken; but somehow understood. As a surgeon and as a

human being, Ralph had the capacity to listen. The grateful appreciation of his patients is testimony to his sensitivity as is the extraordinary range of his relationships. Ralph was not driven by status, rather he sought out honest human beings who thought for themselves, whatever their stations in life. Those were the people that he chose as his friends. His imposing physical presence was complemented by his towering intellect. An insatiable reader, Ralph had the capacity to store and to recall information on diverse subjects. He loved crossword puzzles and classical music. With certainty, he possessed the virtue of memory. The virtue of action was also an aspect of Ralph's wisdom and his legacy. He pushed himself to excel and communicated those expectations to his children. In the words of his family—"he worked fast—not always neatly, but fast." If Ralph agreed to go somewhere, he expected to be on time. If he agreed to do something, it was not deferred.

I mentioned earlier how extraordinary it was last evening to hear the voices of Ralph's grandchildren as each recalled his or her memories of their Papa. In fact, one of his grandchildren communicated not with language, rather, her face bespoke the depth of her love for Ralph. I watched Elise, his oldest grandchild, as she sat silently, assenting to every story, her face awash in tears pierced by an extraordinary smile. As I watched her I thought how quickly Ralph would have noted the depth of love that radiated from her, a love shared by every member of his family. Elise, your testimony was most like his—he did not have to say it—he was sure that all of you would know.

To My Father

A giant pine, magnificent and old,
Stood staunch against the sky and all around
Shed beauty, grace and power. Within its fold
Birds safely reared their young.
Beneath was gentle, and the cooling shade
Gave cheer to passers-by. Its towering arms
A landmark stood, erect and unafraid,
As if to say, "Fear naught from life's alarms."

It fell one day. Where it had dauntless stood
Was loneliness and void. But men who passed
Paid tribute—said, "To know this life was good,
It left its mark on me. Its work stands fast."
And so it lives. Such life no bonds can hold—
This giant pine, magnificent and old.

Georgia Harkness

