

MEMORIAL OF ROLLIN W. WORKMAN

Rollin W. Workman (the W stands for Wallace) died on XXXXX at the age of xxx. He was born April 17, 1926, in his grandparent's house on the edge of the then tiny village of Poland, Ohio, a suburb of Youngstown. He spent the greater part of his first year sleeping in an opened dresser drawer. At the age of one, his parents with him as part of their small store of household furnishings, moved to Urbana, Illinois, the home of the University of Illinois. His father, a geologist, became part of the State Geological Survey, an agency located near the University, but not part of it. In rapid succession after arrival in Urbana, Rollin acquired two brothers and a sister. All are still living.

One day in 4 grade, he took a pair of opera glasses to school in order to see the blackboard. From then on, he wore glasses. He graduated from high school on the evening of D-Day, hours after the allied forces landed on the Normandy beaches. During his senior year, a day before his 18th birthday, he enlisted in the U.S. navy to escape the draft. His thought was that lying in a bunk on a warm ship would be preferable to lying in the cold mud of an army fox hole.

The navy let him in only by giving him a waiver on his eyes. It needed people with good high school academic records to send to Radio Technician school to learn how to repair radios, radars, and sonars.. Radio Tech school took ten months, finishing just as the war ended. Then, as a Radio Technician 2nd class, it was off to an LST on the China coast. In a budget paper, Rollin described the futile, but sometimes amusing, missions of that LST while everyone waited to go home.

Discharged in August of 1946, Rollin spent 3 years getting a B.S. in Physics from Illinois and taking up running, the only physical activity of which an inept, non-natural athlete is capable. All of his life, he remembered vividly the 2 baskets, both accidents, that he made playing basketball in high school phys ed classes, and the one time he, again accidentally, caught a softball. He had no other athletic achievements.

For graduate school, Rollin went to Michigan in Ann Arbor. Along with a Master's

Degree in Physics came the realization that, if he ever got to be a physicist,, he would be as inept at that profession as at athletics. He decided that the only things he liked about physics were the concepts and the logical rigor of mathematical deductions. So, having had an undergraduate intro course in philosophy which seemed to indicate that the subject dealt with concepts, Rollin wandered over to the Philosophy Department and announced that he was a new Philosophy Graduate Student. Nobody objected. Thus does naiveté sidestep required bureaucratic processes and paper work.

After taking undergraduate and graduate philosophy courses for 3 years, lazing around as a Graduate Assistant for another 3, and finally writing a disserta

weeks, Rollin got his Ph.D. Just at that moment, the University of Cincinnati was looking for an Assistant Professor in Philosophy who could teach Philosophy of Science. With his splendid background in Physics, Rollin was hired. He taught Philosophy of Science during his first semester on the faculty and never again during his 30 years of teaching. Instead, his major teaching duty became a year-long, every year course in ethics and political theory. It averaged around 300 students per term, but reached 980 in 1969-70, when a lot of Vietnam War agitated students decided they could save the world through philosophy. In a couple of years, all the agitated saviors transferred to Business Administration in order to make money.

While teaching, Rollin was continuously active in student organizations. For 32 years, he was Faculty Secretary of Omicron Delta Kappa, one the four major activities honor societies on campus. From 1971 until the present, he was Secretary of the UC chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, where the Secretary ran the chapter. For 25 of those years, in effect, he was the chapter. He was also Faculty Advisor of a social fraternity.

For his two roles, Rollin received the Cohen Award for Excellence in Teaching and the Barbour Award for Furthering Student-Faculty Relations. He was one of only two individuals to receive both of those awards over the years.

Rollin's weakest academic function was publishing, of which he did only a half

dozen articles and a small book. He believed, however, that an article entitled "What Makes and Explanation" was the only true and adequate discussion of the subject in print. He also believed that the small book, written as a result of his large class, e "American Liberalism and Conservatism" was and still is the only systematic and adequate analysis of those political philosophies.

Rollin took early retirement in June of 1988 at age 62. He enjoyed teaching, but grading three sets of essay exams of 300 students each term just became too much, even with help from his graduate assistants. Upon retirement, he immediately took up two volunteer activities. Henry Winkler recruited him to teach a class in the about to start Learning in Retirement program at UC (now called the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute). He taught a class every quarter but one from the beginning of the program to the present.

The other volunteer activity was as an academic advisor for undergraduates, in the College of Arts and Sciences Student Advising Center. There he stayed until he died, though he had to give up advising when the last bit of macula in his eyes dried up and floated away, leaving him unable to use computers efficiently enough to do the work. In his latter years, he puttered about, doing whatever he found that needed doing. By that time, he had become a kind of fixture in the Advising Center, and nobody seemed to think it odd or inappropriate that he should be hanging around.

Rollin achieved a certain reputation on campus as that fellow who wore shorts, not only when it was warm, but when it ought to be warm. Some very old people also remembered him as the fellow who was regularly running around the track long before

anybody else took up **running** and it became **fashionable**. Rollin always **resented** all of the new people who began cluttering **up** the UC **tracks** in the mid-60's. After the age of 70, he had slowed down **so** much that he refused to call what he was doing by the term "running", using "jogging" instead. His aging body preferred the noun "**idiocy**".

As what might be called **social** service, Rollin financially supported **a** black family from the time he retired until he died. It consumed all of his savings and 80% of his monthly after tax income. The result was a significantly narrowed personal life financially.

Rollin became a member of the Literary Club in 1981. He served as

Secretary from Fall 1994 through spring 2001. His minutes were far too long and detailed, as a result of which, in a well executed coup d'état, he became in 2001 the only Secretary in the history of the Club to be voted out of office. As a consolation, he was appointed to fill a vacant one-year term as a Trustee. He was then elected President for 2002-2003. **During his presidency, the meeting time was changed from 8:30 to 8, the election night was changed from the first meeting in June to the last meeting in May, and the process for proposing and vetting a prospective member clarified and tightened.**

Rollin assumed without asking two continuing projects related to the Club. When he became Secretary in 1994, he started constructing four indexes of Club papers, one chronological, one alphabetical by author, and one alphabetical by subject. In all of the **indexes, the entries include a one or more sentence** description of the content of the each paper, something usually hidden by the title. The indexes are available in the Club library. The fourth index, which was secret, was chronological, with a personal evaluation of each paper attached. The evaluations ranged from "Outstanding" to "Abominable".

The second Club related project was compiling a yearly roster and keeping it up to date. Unlike the list of names on the yearly program card, the roster contained contact and other information about each member.

As of June 2009, Rollin had written 8 full length papers and 15 budget contributions. All of the full length papers were fiction, most of baroque form, i.e. a plausible story with a sudden fantastic twist at the end. The paper which probably made the greatest impression was his first full length effort, a mingling of the battles of Agincourt and the WW1 battle of the Somme, with a corresponding mingling of two soldiers, one in each battle. Rollin was most proud of two budget length poems, both old-fashioned, with rhyme and meter. The one he considered his greatest literary achievement, entitled "Basilisk" was the tale of St. George and the dragon, poetically told from the dragon's point of view.

In 2006, Rollin was made an Honorary Member.

Rollin loved the Literary Club, and esteemed its members and the Ranieri family members who did so much to make meetings pleasant occasions. In the whole span of

his membership, he attended all but three meetings of the Club. He was something of a loner, finding that he rarely had anything important enough to say among people he regarded as more knowledgeable, capable, and significant than himself. In his last few years, he had trouble hearing, against the background noise, what was said at the post paper tables

In 1999, during the Club's sesquicentennial celebration, Rollin wrote and placed anonymously on the mantle a poetic meditation on the Club. A revised version can serve as his epitaph. He would also have called it his farewell.

For honor, letters, fellowship

The triple torches burn Beside the shield's enchevroned strip, Ne'er dimmed by years they spurn.

Symbolic light within this place On those who come to read, And those who hear, who then with grace Empraise the writer's deed.

Yet short the hour for those who come, It swiftly runs its ways, And one more's added to the sum Of memory's fading days.

How many papers **have been read** Inside these muse touched walls? How many words of men now dead, Which no man now recalls?

Far dimmed are now the thoughts I wove; But, though they disappear, I gained the rank for which I strove: Calliope's compeer,

So let forgetting shadows turn O'er me, who, living, saw How bright the triple torches burn; Luceat Lux Vestrá.

