



John Elwood Merwin

December 8, 1930 - December 31, 2014

John Elwood Merwin, 84, passed away peacefully at home on December 31, 2014. Born to Myrtle E. Hitchcock and Elwood Augustus Merwin on December 8, 1930 in Bridgeport, Connecticut; he grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota and moved to Houston in 1945.

John's professional life was spent at Rice University. There, he first earned BA and BS degrees in Mechanical Engineering in 1952 and 1953. He was subsequently hired as a civil engineering instructor while pursuing his MS, and on completion in 1955, was promoted to assistant professor. He became a full professor of civil engineering in 1978. In a career of 50 years of instructing, he left Rice only twice: from 1958-61, to earn a doctorate degree at the University of Cambridge at England; and for a sabbatical leave in Manchester, England in 1967-68. He was named a Professor Emeritus in 1998.

A beloved husband, father, brother and grandfather, John is survived by his wife of 39 years, Melinda Chaffinch Merwin; his sons Peter, Stephen, and John; his sister Sally Ann Merwin; and his grandchildren Miles, Emile, Marcel, and Isaac.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00pm on Saturday, January 10 at Ascension Episcopal Church, 2525 Seagler Road in Houston.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 10. 2:00 PM (CT)

Ascension Episcopal Church
2525 Seagler Road
Houston, TX 77042

Tribute Wall



“ *John Elwood Merwin*

October 08, 2023 at 10:52 AM



“ *John Elwood Merwin*

October 06, 2023 at 01:12 AM



“ *John Elwood Merwin*

October 05, 2023 at 09:45 AM



“ *John Elwood Merwin*

October 05, 2023 at 01:54 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Elwood Merwin.*



January 09, 2015 at 02:25 PM

MH

“ We were truly sorry to hear of John's passing. He was a wonderful man--husband, father, grandfather and friend. John and my husband met in kindergarten at the age of five and they have continued their friendship ever since. John will be missed. We send our love and condolences to Melinda and all the Merwin family.

Marge and Kent Halstead

Marjorie Halstead - January 09, 2015 at 01:49 PM

DR

“ To Melinda and the entire Merwin family, please accept my deepest condolences for your loss. I just learned of John's passing and my heart, too, is broken. He was such a kind and gentle man whom I admired and I treasured our relationship from Church. I will miss him greatly and pray the Lord sees you through this very difficult time.

David Russell - January 07, 2015 at 09:20 AM

SS

“ Dr. Merwin was the reason I studied Civil Engineering at Rice. He was an excellent educator and a lovely person. He always had time to patiently explain concepts, encourage ASCE bridge building, or enjoy a beer while grilling outside Ryan Lab. I will remember him fondly. My condolences to the Merwin family.

Susan Skoe - January 06, 2015 at 02:02 PM

WF

“ Condolences to the Merwin family. Our thoughts and prayers go out to your whole family. Psalms 147:3 says Jehovah God, "heals the broken hearted, and binds up their wounds." May God bring you comfort and peace.

Williams Family - January 06, 2015 at 01:06 PM

JR

“ John Merwin was one of the greatest influences in my life. As a freshman at Rice in 1971, I was an SE randomly assigned to a German professor as an advisor at Wiess College. John was available for guidance as one of the other advisors and helped to guide me in my engineering curriculum. As a sophomore, I took his Strength of Materials class with its "make 'em and break 'em" lab. This class and others led me to pursue a degree in civil engineering and a fruitful career in the analysis and design of municipal services. I owe it to the observant John Merwin who was available to provide a guiding hand. I had a chance to share this story with John just a few years ago at a Rice Engineering Alumni event and only hope that I have provided and will be able to provide similar guidance to others. Thanks, John. RIP

Jeff Ross - January 05, 2015 at 07:49 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John Elwood Merwin.



January 05, 2015 at 11:34 AM

WC

“ Dr. Merwin would never have remembered me, but I remember him as my faculty advisor at Rice in the early 1970's. While our visits were infrequent, he always made me feel like his door was open in case I needed him. He was a kind man who was interested without being intrusive. My condolences to the Merwin family.

Dr. William Chuoke, D.D.S.

William Chuoke - January 05, 2015 at 10:33 AM

KM

“ *My deepest condolences to the Merwin family. Dr Merwin was my favourite professor at Rice. He was an amazing teacher and mentor to me. From our chats I remember how much he loved his wife and supported her with her struggle with breast cancer and how proud he was of his son John. He was a man of great character.*

kimberly mathis - January 05, 2015 at 02:53 AM