



Frank Edward Woolley

January 23, 1941 - June 4, 2020

Frank Edward Woolley passed away peacefully at home in the loving care of his family on June 4, 2020. He was 79 years old. Frank was born on January 23, 1941, in Chester, Pennsylvania, son of the late Edward and Margery Woolley. He grew up as a middle sibling with two sisters, Ruth and Janet. Frank lived in Meadville, Pennsylvania from the age of 3 to 14. He lived in Fredericksburg, Virginia during his high school years. Frank showed a deep interest in science and engineering from a very young age, and his family frequently re-told both impressive and funny stories about the experiments he ran in his home laboratory, the science fairs he participated in, and his trips to DC to pore through books at the Library of Congress. After learning about arc lamps, which were used at the local cinema, Frank built several arc furnaces, in which he could melt metals. One favorite story is about an experiment that went wrong, caught fire, and was thrown out the window of his attic lab. In high school, he worked for an appliance repair man in the summers. His love of learning is shown in his many academic and career achievements. Frank attended University of Michigan, where he earned a BS in chemical engineering in 1962 and an Army ROTC commission. He stayed on for a fifth year and earned his BS and MS degrees in metallurgical engineering in 1963. It was at U of M that he met his wife, Sandra, who was enrolled in the same freshman English course. Sandra jokingly recalls that having a star student for her boyfriend made for a great tutor for difficult classes. They married in 1962 after graduation and have been married for 58 years. After graduating from U of M, Frank continued his education at MIT, earning his Sc.D. in metallurgy in 1966. He was hired by Corning Glass Company and worked there in 1966-67 while awaiting his active duty assignment from the Army. He served as a Captain in the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps at Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia from 1967-69. During his time there, he was given an extra assignment to set up a woodworking shop for the post. Woodworking would become a lifelong interest and reappear later in his life. He was honorably discharged from the Army in 1969 and returned to Corning and would eventually work there for 32 years. Frank grew to be regarded as one of their glass melting experts. Frank specifically chose the job in Corning because he felt a small town was a good place to raise a family. During his career at Corning, Frank welcomed the opportunity to work for the subsidiary "Corning France." He and Sandy moved the family to Fontainebleau and lived there from 1975-78.

Upon return, Frank continued his dedication to academics and earned his MBA from Syracuse University in 1980. Frank retired at age 58 and enrolled in a two-year furniture apprenticeship program at North Bennet Street School in Boston. He had a passion to make museum furniture reproductions with hand tools. He made several heirloom pieces including a Bombe chest and he made some wonderful friendships with fellow students. His grandkids remember frequenting quite a few furniture museums on family trips, so Frank could learn about antique pieces. Frank was devoted to his family and to his community, volunteering for his church and organizations such as the YMCA, Junior Achievement, the Corning Glass Studio, and the Western Pennsylvania Woodworkers. Values, principles and conscience were what guided Frank's life. These included the importance of family, learning and research, service, honesty, dependability, and planning. His family will always remember his fortitude as he lived with Parkinson's disease and Lewy body dementia with grace and the same rationality that guided him his entire life. He taught through his actions. Frank is survived by his wife, Sandra Miller Woolley; his sons, Michael, Mark, and David; his daughter-in-law, Anita; his four grandchildren, Erika, Brian, Jonah and Henry; and by his sisters Ruth and Janet. Frank will live on in the memories of his family, friends, and colleagues. In lieu of flowers, Frank would have appreciated donations to the Pittsburgh Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases at www.pind.pitt.edu/donate/ or to the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh at www.first-unitarian-pgh.org . Professional services trusted to D'ALESSANDRO FUNERAL HOME and CREMATORY LTD., Lawrenceville. The family will be holding a virtual memorial service on Saturday, July 11, 2020 at 1pm. Please contact any member of the family for further information.

Tribute Wall

DB

“ One memory I have was was when he came to visit us and I was telling him of how my parents used to take us to museums during vacation to look at old furniture. "Who in the world finds looking at old furniture exciting?", I asked. Uncle Frank replied that he found restoring old furniture his passion and was taking a class in it.

Dean Bnaerjee - June 22, 2020 at 09:34 PM

DM

“ Still a fond memory of Frank telling us at a work coffee break, probably late 70's at CGW, about taking his shaggy dog to vet, where Vet asked, "what's the name?" and when he replied, "Woolley" the vet said, "no, not the dogs name, your name".

Dave Morgan - June 08, 2020 at 07:56 PM

CH

“ Frank taught "Industrial Glass" at Alfred University as an adjunct professor. He came over every Monday to teach from 6 pm to 9 pm, which was an hour drive each way, after (presumably) working a full day. We learned a lot from him in that class - practical information about glass melting but also how to give presentations and distill messages. When to use humor in a presentation and the risks around it. At the end of the semester he brought us all on a plant tour of the Fallbrook tubing plant and then we had a spaghetti dinner at his house. He was an all-around giving person who gave of his time and energy. I'll miss knowing he's around.

Chris Heckle - June 08, 2020 at 03:28 PM

EH

It was a joy and an honor to have known Frank personally and to have worked closely with him. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to walk with him and in his footsteps.

Elton Harris - June 15, 2020 at 08:35 AM

EM

Frank and I were students in the furnituremaking program at North Bennet Street School in Boston. He was a fine craftsman and a capital G Gentleman. RIP

Ed Mulligan, NBSS 2000

Ed Mulligan - June 18, 2020 at 11:24 AM