



Nelson Wieman

December 10, 1914 - November 7, 2011

N. Orr Wieman, long time resident of Corvallis, OR, died peacefully at the age of 96 at Rose City Adult Care Home in West Linn, Oregon after a brief illness. Orr was born December 10, 1914 in California, where his father, Henry Nelson Wieman, was Professor of Philosophy at Occidental College. At the age of 11, he moved with his family to Chicago when his father joined the faculty of the University of Chicago. Orr graduated from University of Chicago High School in 1933 and attended Carleton College for two years before transferring to the University of Michigan to major in forestry, launching a life-long engagement with the outdoors.

On January 30, 1941, Orr and Alison Fry were married in Chicago, with his father officiating. Shortly after, the couple left for Oregon, driving across the country in a Model A Ford to make their first home in a cabin near Alsea. Until he retired in 1980, he worked as a sawyer, millwright and foreman, holding positions of responsibility in several mills over the years while he and Alison raised their five children in the rural communities of Nashville and Hoskins before moving to Corvallis in 1964.

His lifelong attachment to physical activity and his innate curiosity about the natural world were extensive but difficult to categorize. He was athletic and competitive but showed little interest in organized sports, satisfied to play softball with his wife and children in a field by their home or tennis on a neighbor's crumbling court and basketball with family friends in a grade school gym. Later in life, when one of his children gave him an old windsurfer, he

took up that sport as well but never saw the need to upgrade his patched-up equipment. He was drawn to exploring remote and secluded places but always sought the company of family and friends. Weekends often involved the family loading into the van to visit the Coast, or travel remote Forest Service roads in Eastern Oregon, fly fishing in the Coast Range, hiking in the Cascades, or scuba diving for clams in Alsea Bay.

While his choice of forestry as a college major was tied to his love of the outdoors, and his interest in tidal pools led to graduate study in oceanography, he acquired his great store of knowledge about the natural world more by observation, experience and exploration than by formal study. He was knowledgeable about geology, astronomy and animal life, especially of Oregon. He was an expert in identifying trees, and as an avid birdwatcher, he was adept at spotting and identifying birds and was instrumental in the effort to restore the Willamette Valley bluebird population.

When he and his wife Alison retired in 1982, this was simply an opportunity to increase and expand these activities. Together, in a pickup-mounted camper, they made frequent excursions for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, winter and summer camping, bird watching, hiking and fly-fishing. Accompanied by family members, they made several week-long canoe trips through the Boundary Waters Wilderness Area, and in his 80's, with his friend of 65 years and frequent co-adventurer, Huck Macpherson, he navigated the Willamette River from Peoria to Astoria by canoe. In the period of life commonly called "old age," accompanied by his wife, and various groups of children, their wives and children, and family friends, he travelled from Alaska to Antarctica, descended into the mile-deep Grand Canyon and climbed the 14,000-foot Mt. Rainier and Mt. Shasta. He died having lived and shared a full and happy life. He is survived by his sons Howard and spouse Leslie Wieman of Oakland, CA, Dow Wieman of Gloucester, MA, Carl Wieman and spouse Sarah Gilbert of Washington D.C., Lynd and spouse Anne Wieman of Milwaukie, OR; his daughter Frances Moon of Dublin, CA; his sister Kendra (Eleanor) Smith of Berkeley, CA; his grandchildren Ben Wieman and spouse Laura, Seth

Wieman and spouse Nina Abramzon , Claire and Daniel Wieman, and Andrew and Emily Moon; and great-grandchildren Leonard and Ronni Wieman.

Orr was preceded in death by his wife of 69 years, Alison Fry Wieman; son Louis; sisters Marion and Florence; brother Robert; daughter-in-law Deborah Adams and son-in-law Bruce Moon.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be sent to the Alzheimer's Association at alz.org or the National Audubon Society at audubon.org.

A memorial service is set for 11:00 am Saturday, November 26, 2011 at McHenry Funeral Home 206 NW 5th St. Corvallis. Private inurnment at Bellfountain Cemetery.