

Obituary of Paul Hemenway Altrocchi

Paul Hemenway Altrocchi was born in San Francisco on June 8, 1931, son of Rudolph Altrocchi, Chairman of the Dept. of Italian at the U. of California, Berkeley, and Julia Cooley Altrocchi, noted poet and Historian of the West. He died in Honolulu on January 28, 2026.

Paul graduated from Andover (1948), received his AB from Harvard College (1952) and his MD from Harvard Medical School (1957), after completing his Neurology training at Columbia-Presbyterian Hospital in NYC. He fulfilled his two years of military service as a researcher at the National Institute of Neurological Diseases, National Institutes of Health, in Bethesda, Maryland. Subsequent degrees included a Master's in Public Health (1978) from U.C. Berkeley and a Diploma in Tropical Medicine (1979) from the University of São Paulo, Brazil.

Paul worked nights to pay his way through medical school. During his first year, he was elected President of his class. After his third year, he was awarded a Sheldon Traveling Fellowship from Harvard in International Health; he spent eight months in the South Pacific, New Zealand, Australia, and Africa. His final week with Dr. Albert Schweitzer at Schweitzer's hospital in French Equatorial Africa was one of Paul's lifetime high points.

Over the years, Paul's love of the peoples of the world and aspiration to do good during his time on earth led him to teach Neurology in Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Brazil, the Navajo Reservation, and Okinawa. He also participated in water projects in Mexico, and, with the Rotary Club of Honolulu, several work projects in schools in the rural Philippines. At age 88, he helped build a Job Training Center in Thailand with the Rotary Club of Honolulu.

In 1957, he married Penelope (Pencie) McBride, and they moved to the Bay Area where he joined the full-time faculty of Stanford Medical School and later became Head of the Dept. of Neurology at the Palo Alto Medical Clinic. He and Pencie had five daughters, Sally Altrocchi, Catherine Waidyatilleka, Polly Clark, Alexandra Wolbach, and Julia Slatcher, all of whom he imbued with a love of our world and a keen understanding of one's obligation to contribute to the world in a positive way.

After he and his wife separated, Paul moved to Bend, Oregon, where he practiced Neurology until his retirement in 1998. During that time he became President of the Bend Rotary Club and helped to establish the first Rotary Club in the Soviet Union. He became an enthusiastic skier, fly-fisherman, bow-and-arrow hunter, and continued his world travels and teaching.

He lived his final 20+ years in Hawaii, during which time he published prolifically: a medical book on back pain and seven other books on diverse topics, in addition to a dozen books and two dozen scholarly papers on his favorite hobby, the Shakespeare Authorship Question. He was an Oxfordian since age 16, the longest-duration Oxfordian in the world. *Edward de Vere IS "Shakespeare"!*

Surviving him are his five daughters, nine grandchildren (Caden and Dillon Waidyatilleka; Lucy, Cameron, and Caroline Clark; Otis and June Wolbach; Bennett and Wade Slatcher), and his partner since 2006, Wailani Broad, travel companion extraordinaire. He will be buried next to his parents in the family plot in Seymour, Connecticut.

Obituary sent to Don Anderson courtesy of Cate Waidyatilleka, Daughter #2

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