

Andrew J.W. Scheffey (1928-2012)



LEVERETT -- Andrew J.W. Scheffey, 84, since the 1950's an advocate of planning for the preservation and proper use of the public environment, died at home on Mon (3-19-12).

A long-time resident of Leverett, Massachusetts, Mr. Scheffey gave title of the family land purchased there over forty years ago to the town and state for preservation and recreational use. He cared deeply for the natural world and spent much time working to preserve open space as a resource for spiritual renewal and planetary health. His book, *Conservation Commissions in Massachusetts*, 1969, describes the rise of conservation as an active land policy. In his work, Mr. Scheffey cared as much for the human condition as he did the natural world, seeing clearly their interdependence. He worked to develop global awareness of human need and its impact on earth's various ecosystems.

After 25 years of teaching at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mr. Scheffey retired in 1988 as Professor Emeritus of the Dept. of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning. He is remembered by many as a provocative and inspirational teacher whose lectures integrated the philosophical and practical aspects of the newly emerging conservation and land use movement with his concern and passion for the subject. During his career at the University of Massachusetts, Mr. Scheffey introduced interdisciplinary studies and involvement of resource specialists at the undergraduate level to deepen students concerns for the effect of man's decisions on the landscape.

He also taught three years at Williams College, where he established the ongoing Center for Environmental Studies and became its first director in 1967. Part of this process included making the program more gender equal, as at that time, the field was primarily dominated by men. The Center had particular interest in "the hinterlands" regions 50 to 150 miles from metropolitan centers. It brought together public citizens and corporate and government leaders to regionalize planning of complex issues for helping to maintain the quality of New England's water, land and air. Throughout this period he had numerous advisory roles at the state and national levels, and in 1966 during the Johnson Administration he became Program Chairman for the White House Conference on Natural Beauty, which assessed all of America's recreation resources.

Andrew Scheffey was born February 27, 1928 in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Haverford College and then worked two years in rural southern Mexico as an alternative to military service during the Korean War. He received a Masters degree and Doctorate from the University of Michigan in 1958 and, with his wife Alice Scheffey, began four years of development work overseas, in Mexico and with the International Cooperation Administration in Seoul, Korea.

Throughout his life, summers were spent in the Berkshires at a small cabin where in later years he worked with the Trustees of Reservations to preserve a large acreage from development. Andrew had a great love for life and showed this through his appreciation for nature, music, poetry and animals; through his love of parties, food, friends and family; through noticing the changing light over the moments of a day and the season, in the sky and in the meadow, and through physical work, reflection and solitude. He leaves his wife Alice Scheffey, writer, of Leverett; three children: Mia Scheffey, artist, of Brattleboro, VT; Heston Scheffey, cabinetmaker, of Contoocook, NH; Elizabeth Scheffey, teacher, of Leverett; a brother, two sisters, and five grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at the Leverett Congregational Church in the center of Leverett at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 31st. In place of flowers, send gifts of remembrance in Andrew's name to the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, Box 195, Leverett, MA 01054. Burial will be private. Arrangements are under the direction of Walker Funeral Home, 14 High Street, Greenfield.

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