



Obituary for Margaret H. Perkins

1915 - 7/22/2012

Margaret H. Perkins, widow of former President Perkins, dies

2:36 p.m., July 24, 2012--Margaret Hiscock Perkins, of Cokesbury Village in Hockessin, Del., died on Sunday, July 22, after a brief illness. She was 97.

Mrs. Perkins was the widow of John Alanson Perkins, who served as president of the University of Delaware from 1950-67. The Perkins Student Center is named in his honor.

In his history of the University, John Munroe wrote, "[John Perkins] had the assistance of an exceedingly able wife as intelligent, calm, self-effacing and as interested as he in the pursuit of excellence. Both devoted themselves to the University's advancement, the one as hostess and intellectual collaborator, the other as president, promoter, and, to the best of his ability, as an instigator, a prod to greater effort and greater contributions by students, faculty, trustees, and other friends of the University."

One of Dr. and Mrs. Perkins' proudest achievements was the establishment of UD's Winterthur Program in American Material Culture, which began in 1952. (The 60-year anniversary of that partnership is now the focus of an exhibit at the Winterthur Museum.)

In 2001, the University presented Mrs. Perkins with the Medal of Distinction.

Born in Ann Arbor, Mich., she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in political science from the University of Michigan, graduating Phi Beta Kappa. It was there she met Dr. Perkins.

Mrs. Perkins also served on the board of the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Calif. Throughout her life she was active on numerous library, museum, and religious committees.

Mrs. Perkins travelled widely throughout the world but always maintained her family at the center of her life, with summers at her cottage in Northern Michigan.

Mrs. Perkins was preceded in death by her husband in 1982 and by her daughter, Carey Perkins, in 2007. She is survived by her son, J. James Perkins and his family, wife, Barbara, son, Reed, and daughter, Erin, and her husband, Matthew Coleman.

A memorial service will be held at 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 25, at the Cokesbury Village Auditorium, 726 Loveville Rd., Hockessin.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the John A. Perkins Student Center, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716 or the Carey Perkins Historic Museum Fund, Bay View Association, Box 583, Bay View, MI 49770.