

Frederick Phineas Rose

Fred, as an adult--Freddy, when we were children--was my professional colleague, my partner, my brother, and - with our younger brother, Elihu - my closest friend.

With the exception of his beloved Sandy, no one knew him better, or admired him more. The author of the phrase "familiarity breeds contempt" did not know Fred Rose.

From his childhood playing of the accordion, which actually brought the neighborhood dogs to howl in accompaniment, to his badgering me to take up golf -partly because he loved to share his pleasures and partly, I believe, to have a built-in companion-his presence has been with me throughout my life.

Fred was a remarkable individual; and, like a many-faceted gem, he presented different sides to different observers.

One was that of the warm and gregarious fellow who was a wonderful host and an excellent guest, a delightful companion--on the golf course, the ski slope, in a tennis game or at a chessboard; one whose piano playing, barber shop quartet singing and truly eye-popping origami creations made him a pleasure to be with on any social occasion. His sharing of his knowledge of trees, and his endless little gifts-door prizes, he called them were famous among his friends.

Another side of Fred was that of the disciplined and focused individual who set high standards for himself and for all who

worked with him, who stretched himself and who expected others to do the same.

A natural leader, Fred delivered more than other people, and he got from his subordinates more than they thought they were capable of giving.

To colleagues, he was generous--with praise and with material rewards (a rare combination)--and he bestowed and received loyalty of a kind rarely seen today.

Fred was unusual in devoting to his charitable activities the same energy, efficiency and thoroughness that he gave to his professional work. He loved (and lived) Andrew Carnegie's comment that men of wealth should expend the same skill and attention in giving wealth away that they did in earning it in the first place.

His handiwork--at Lincoln Center, at the American Museum of Natural History and elsewhere--will outlive his generation.

A third facet one fundamental to Fred's character but less visible to a casual observer--was his Old Testament sense of righteousness and justice.

Morality to him was black and white. There were things that "were done" and others that "were not done"; and he had little patience with those who, in his opinion, could not tell the difference.

All these facets of Fred's being came together in his relations with his family--the central focus of his life.

A more attentive, more devoted son did not exist. His calls, his visits, his letters to our

parents and to David Rose, our uncle and almost "second father," were what every parent hopes for; and his relations with his parents set the tone for his relations with his wife, his children, his grandchildren and his brothers.

How to celebrate the life of such a man?

He was precociously bright: graduating from Horace Mann at 16, he earned his Yale degree by the age of 19. Although he regretted not being able to take more humanities courses in college, he was fiercely proud of his technical credentials and thought of himself as an engineer.

Receiving an honorary doctorate from Yale was one of the high points of his life, and of the life of our family.

For Fred, building buildings was not an occupation, it was a vocation, a calling; and he approached it with a seriousness, and a joy, that was a wonder to behold.

Fred liked to describe himself -not as a real estate man or an entrepreneur -but as a builder; he secretly considered himself the best construction superintendent in the city of New York.

At one time he said that his favorite projects were the Bankers Trust Building at 280 Park Avenue and the 40-story apartment tower at 45 East 89th Street; but the truth is that his favorite was whatever he was working on at the moment.

Fred was public-spirited; and his 35 directorships and trusteeships included many of the nation's most important

institutions. He was proud of his attendance record at Board and committee meetings and of the time and effort he devoted to preparing for them.

Fred was a loyal and loving friend, neighbor, colleague and, above all, family member, in each relationship giving, giving, always giving, in full measure.

In all the countless conversations and discussions we had over the years, I never remember Fred ever using the terms "success" or "failure." To him, life was a never-ending process, a seamless web, a continuing journey.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose essays Fred loved, thought otherwise.

In one memorable passage Emerson wrote:

"To laugh often and much, to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Fred, dearest Fred, you have succeeded!

Daniel Rose talks can be found on: www.danielrose.org