



Harold A. Miller

1903-1981

Harold A. Miller, immensely successful lumberman of the Pacific Northwest and California, was a principal founder of the Western Forestry Center. As Chairman of the Board from 1968 to his death on February 12, 1981, his leadership and support were vital to the establishment, growth, and ultimate success of the Western Forestry Center.

In partnership with his fellow Forestry Center trustees, Mr. Miller recognized a need to replace Portland's old Forestry Building after its tragic destruction by fire in 1964. Upon obtaining widespread community support, Mr. Miller and co-founders began construction of the Western Forestry Center in July 1969. On June 5, 1971, the original 35,000 square-foot Center opened its doors to the public.

Following a decade of rapid educational growth, the need for expansion was recognized by the trustees in 1979. Mr. Miller provided the initial efforts to fund a million-dollar, 10,000 square-foot education building which was dedicated as Harold A. Miller Hall on December 19, 1980.

Architect John Storrs designed a timeless monument to wood engineering and to Harold A. Miller, the man who made the building possible. This structure with its workshop, classroom, meeting room and large exhibit area contributes to the beauty of the Forestry Center that is a Portland landmark.

Miller, born May 12, 1903, in Detroit, Michigan, was the son of Ernest Chester Miller and Sarah Manola Miller. His youth was spent in Aberdeen, Washington, where he lived with his family, including his sister Catherine (Mrs. Robert M. Ingram Sr.). At age 13, Harold began summer work in the family-owned shingle mill.

The Miller family took pride in Harold's acceptance to Stanford University in 1922. Predictably, Harold returned to Aberdeen in 1926, following his graduation from Stanford's School of Economics. He promptly took an interest in his father's lumbering business and began to demonstrate his superb management skills.

On March 9, 1929, just days before the world plunged into the Great Depression,

Harold A. Miller and Jane Stimson were married. Their marriage flourished through the decades. Three daughters, Joanne (Mrs. Theodore Lilley, Jr.), Prudence (Mrs. Philip Miller), and A. Jane (Mrs. Leo G. Graham), and twelve grandchildren are a legacy to the fifty-three year marriage.

In 1931, Charles S. Stimson recognized Harold A. Miller's business skills and asked Harold to relocate in Portland to develop lumbering operations in Tillamook County owned by Mr. Stimson. Harold reluctantly left his family's operations at Aberdeen and moved south. In concert with Stimson, Miller located and built the Stimson sawmill near Forest Grove, during the height of the Great Depression. Immediately, a bond was formed with the community of Forest Grove that continues, decades later. Jobs in the forest, in the mill, and in subsequent remodeling and expansions of the mill have sustained the economy of Forest Grove and surrounding communities. The management of prime timberland on a sustained yield basis has assured employees job security. Stimson operations and community concerns are so interwoven that each exists as a partner of the other.

Other business ventures of Harold A. Miller included purchases of redwood timberland in Del Norte County, California. Miller Redwood and Rellim (Miller spelled backwards) Redwood were companies that grew out of substantial investments made between 1942 and 1960. Large parcels of this ownership were later carved out by the U.S. Government in condemnation suits to create the Redwood National Park. Shockingly expensive and disappointingly slow in developing, the redwood park was a matter with which Harold A. Miller took great exception with President Lyndon

Baines Johnson. Continued management of the residual redwood holdings allowed the business successes so characteristic of Harold A. Miller's involvement.

In his business activities and his personal life, Miller was a very private man, shunning public attention. His business successes allowed him to generously support educational and charitable causes. The Western Forestry Center, Stanford University, Oregon Historical Society, Columbia Maritime Museum, The Medical Research Foundation, the Neurological Sciences Foundation, and St. Vincent Medical Foundation were among the many recipients of Harold A. Miller's special support.

Mr. Miller served as President of the American Hardboard Association in 1952 and as President of the California Redwood Association from 1968 until 1971.

Mr. Miller's total commitment to those endeavors capturing his interest was evident in his avocations, just as in business. He was a fiercely competitive tennis player all his adult life. His maritime interests were manifested for a time in a 135-foot sailing yacht, the Te Vega, used for both business and pleasure. And a fascination with the efficiency of flying led to the purchase of a jet airplane and the formation of Stim-Air, a private transport company.

The successes enjoyed by Harold A. Miller as a businessman would have allowed him a comfortable retirement in his later years. Instead, with a characteristic vigor, he maintained his business involvements until his death in 1981.

Undeniably, Harold A. Miller was a man who stood out among men. He touched the lives of many through business and philanthropy and, accordingly, left a better world than he entered.