



## Mr. Walter Adamson

January 27, 1917 - December 30, 2015

Walter Adamson departed this life on December 30, 2015, after a long illness. The son of Swedish immigrants, he was born in New York City on January 27, 1917.

Education, family, and service for others were his prime values. After high school, Walter worked full-time while obtaining a B.A. at New York University at night, then took an M.A. in 1939. He taught a year of high school and was then commissioned as an Ensign in the Navy. Major postings were in Washington, DC, and at the U.S. Embassy in Venezuela and later Ecuador where, on leaving, he was honored with the Order of Abdon Calderon. Later, as a reserve, he attained the rank of Captain USNRRCR.

As an educational professional for forty years, Dr. Adamson leaves a lengthy legacy of accomplishment. After the Navy he taught and served in the administration at Central Connecticut State College, while also completing a Doctorate in International Relations at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University (1955).

He then joined the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) in Washington and developed a Cooperative Research Program involving consultation and negotiation with colleges and universities. In 1960 he moved on to USAID Guatemala under the Alliance for Progress, which led to the construction of

over 200 rural elementary schools. Next he was appointed U.S. Adviser to the Superior Council of Universities of Central America (CSUCA) in San Jose, Costa Rica. While there, he also developed a still-thriving Graduate Institute for Business Administration (INCAE) and coordinated President J.F. Kennedy's visit to and speech at the National University attended by 10,000 people.

In 1965, he returned to the U.S., first as Regional Director for USOE in San Francisco, then as Director of Human Resources Development for Latin America (USAID/Department of State) in Washington, DC, and finally as a World Bank specialist on Latin American education. By 1970 he was in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as USAID Education Office Director where he implemented an \$80 million middle-school construction program. He then moved to Lima, Peru, where he developed a new Graduate School of Business Management (ESAN).

After his foreign service, Dr. Adamson became Vice President and Professor at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts. While there he also developed the Public Administration and International Relations components of its newly formed Political Science Department. In all the positions he held, Walter enjoyed professional challenges, thrived on the creativity required to meet them, and relished adapting to a diversity of cultures. Yet the fact that he both began and finished his career with students in the classroom is telling; it was a passion he would pursue even upon retiring to Asheville, NC, in 1987.

During his professional life, Dr. Adamson was variously honored: with the Order of the Quetzal personally presented by the President of Guatemala; the Special Citation for Meritorious Service at USOE; and Distinguished Professor at Bridgewater State College. He was also elected to the Honorary Historical Society at NYU and the Alumni Hall of Fame at James Monroe High School. And he will be remembered by his many friends, former students and

associates at home and abroad.

Civic service was central for Dr. Adamson, wherever he lived. He was a founding member of Civitan Club, New Britain, CT; a PTA President, Springfield, VA; on the Board of Directors of American Schools in Rio de Janeiro and Lima; and a Board Secretary for the Duxbury, MA, Community Council, as well as for the Leadership Asheville Alumni Association. He served six years on the Board of the UNCA Foundation and as Chairman thereof; was selected for the President's Circle of the Asheville Citizen-Times; and, in a capstone experience, worked on the Task Force which brought into being the College for Seniors at UNCA, drafted its By-Laws, and was the founding President of its Board.

While serving in the Navy in Venezuela, Walter met and then courted Mariza de Faro, a daughter of the Brazilian Ambassador. Their marriage in Caracas on January 12, 1945, led to over seventy years of a loving and happy union, even as it survived fourteen changes of residence in the USA and abroad.

In addition to his wife Mariza, he is survived by their three children: Walter L. and his wife Lauren, David and his wife Karen, and Carolyn and her husband Charles. Also by his five grand children, Daniel and Nash, Jillian, Eddie and Sally, and by three great grandchildren, Theodore, Jasper, and Janelle; also by his nephew Carlos, wife Jaqueline, and their family of Cincinnati; by niece Sylvia and her husband Peter of Huarmey, Peru; and by nephew Warren and his wife Barbara of Gainesville, Florida.

Celebration of life services will be held at 11 am, Saturday, January 23, at Grace Episcopal Church, 871 Merrimon Avenue, Asheville, NC 28804. Family will receive friends immediately after the service and internment will be at State Veterans' Cemetery, Black Mountain, NC.

In lieu of flowers friends may wish to remember Walter with a donation to Care Partners, Hospice and Palliative Care Services at 68 Sweeten Creek Road, Asheville, NC 28803.

# Cemetery Details

## Western Carolina State Veteran's Cemetery

Old US Hwy. 70  
Black Mountain, NC 28711

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

JAN 23. 11:00 AM (ET)

Grace Episcopal Church  
871 Merrimon Avenue  
Asheville, NC 28804  
graceparish@bellsouth.net  
<http://graceepiscopalchurch.us/>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Walter Adamson*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *Walter Adamson was the best professor I had in my education. He was a mentor. When I am curious about the world, the history and politics of a situation, he is always on my mind. He is dearly missed. The world lost a great teacher and compassionate man when he passed. Daniel Pailes*



**Daniel Pailes** - December 14, 2022 at 07:58 PM



“ *Karen Youncke lit a candle in memory of Mr. Walter Adamson*



**Karen Youncke** - January 26, 2016 at 12:41 PM



“ *We will miss Walter so much. He was such a help when I was President of Civitan.*  
*Norma Messer*

**Norma Messer** - January 22, 2016 at 08:17 PM

MI

“*Mrs. Adamson, so sorry for your loss. Such a fine legacy. May they warm your heart always. Always rely on the God of all comfort for solace.*

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**Minnie** - January 20, 2016 at 10:02 AM

CF

“*I wish Mariza and Walter's family sincerest condolences. When I became director for the NC Center for Creative Retirement in 2010, Walter was one of the first people who reached out to share memories of the founding of the center and to let me know about all of the dedicated people who had made the center a ground-breaking institution. He held up high standards in the kindest and most inspiring ways. I will miss him.*

*Catherine Frank*

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**Catherine Frank** - January 03, 2016 at 07:38 AM