

MS. HILL-GILL: This memorial is for Lyttleton Bowen Purnell Gould, Jr., and written by Jim Carney, who was the head of Purnell from 1973 to 1979.

LYTTLETON BOWEN PURNELL GOULD, JR.

MS. HILL-GILL: Lyttleton Bowen Purnell Gould, Jr., consummate lifelong educator, died quietly and peacefully, as he had lived, on December 30, 2009, at Essex Meadows, Essex, Connecticut, his home for the past many years. Lytt left behind a daughter, a son, two stepdaughters, ten grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren, and over twelve hundred alumnae daughters of Purnell, the school he founded with his beloved Sis in 1965.

Lytt Gould was born September 10, 1919, in New York City and made his life's work in and around those environs for his ninety years. He was a graduate of Hotchkiss in 1939 and of Yale College in 1943, where he was a member of DKE and Elihu. During the Second World War, Lytt served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, as a skipper of a sub chaser, and as executive officer of a destroyer escort in the Pacific. His love of the sea would follow him throughout his life.

And some would argue that life began, indeed, on June 21, 1947, when he married Mary (Sis) Krech Jackson, who died in 1995, to whom he was married for 48 years. Lytt was devoted to Sis, a gentle lady of great warmth and grace, whom he adored to his last breath. Together they built a life of purpose and dedication. Sis, ever the dauntless partner, joined him every step of his path in education. Lytt began his career at the Landon School in Bethesda, Maryland, where he taught American history, coached football and baseball, and served as the head of the middle school from 1947 to 1955. Thereafter, he became the headmaster of Far Hills Country Day School in New Jersey until 1963, when he and his wife, Sis, founded The Purnell School in Pottersville, New Jersey, where he served as the first head until he retired in 1973. Purnell was an idea well ahead of its time. Lytt believed passionately that there ought to be an alternative to the then highly competitive college preparatory schools for girls (it could easily have been for boys, too). He believed that people learn differently, that all students do not come in the same mold, and that one size should not fit all. He believed that success in life depends on more than a college education, that self-confidence, a sense of self-worth, is at the core of being and of being successful.

Lytt was a mentor, too. He had a generous heart, an open spirit, a kind soul. Lytt always spoke of "we," whether meaning his adored Sis or his family, or his friends, or the community in which he lived. I don't think I ever heard him speak of "me"; he was too busy thinking of others to be self-absorbed. I know this for sure, first while a young teacher and dean at Purnell and later, when my wife, Laurie, and I were selected to succeed Lytt and Sis as co-heads in 1973. We were very young; some might say insufferably so. Much could have gone awry, but it didn't. Lytt and Sis saw to it. They guided gently, whispered softly, and cheered loudly.

Such an educator was well-recognized. Lytt was a member of the board of Miss Porter's School, Holton Arms School, Garrison Forest School, Briarcliff College, and, of course, Purnell. He served as trustee of Mystic Seaport Museum and Lyme Academy of Fine Arts, of which he was also chairman. Upon retirement from Purnell, Lytt and Sis located in Hadlyme, Connecticut, where Lytt then had the chance to support Sis in her passion as a pioneer in horseback riding for the disabled through the NAHRA. They founded what is today the nationally esteemed High Hopes Therapeutic Riding Center in Old Lyme, Connecticut, where they hosted equestrian events for the Special Olympics in 1995.

Lytt was an inveterate sailor. He was the proud captain of Tamaqua, which he sailed from their camp at Long Cove in Vinalhaven, Maine. He also maintained a traditional lobster boat, a day sailer, and a shell for Sis to do her daily rowing. Should you have happened into Long Cove while cruising Penobscot Bay, you might well have come upon a welcoming mooring. You then would have discovered by a note attached that it was yours for the asking, assuming, of course, that you would send a donation to either Purnell or High Hopes! While never a reliable income stream for either institution, the grateful checks floated in year after year.

Lytt was a longstanding member of The Headmistresses Association of the East and The National Association of Principals of Schools for Girls, and cherished the friendship and collegiality that he gained from both organizations.

Lytt Gould was one of the good guys. He knew not of duplicity. He was open to ideas, open-hearted, principled, always a man of good cheer, and handsomer than a king. Lytt Gould left a footprint; we are all the better for his passing our way.

MR. GALBRAITH: We will read just one more memorial today and continue these on Monday, but Blair Stambaugh will have my head if we do not read them all and give them the proper attention they deserve.