

Lowell Bradford Barnhart

Lowell Bradford Barnhart, *Verger Emeritus*, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Honolulu

30 September 1935 – 3 August 2015

Lowell went gently to his reward at his home in Victoria, British Columbia, in the early evening of the third of August after a long journey with prostate cancer and accompanying issues which first emerged in 2007 in Honolulu. Caring physicians in Honolulu, Seattle, and Victoria made it possible for him to lead, as much as possible, his normal life as a gregarious, generous, and committed lover of people, music, lighting, and family.

Lowell's began life in Middletown, Ohio – a town he nicknamed "Chitlin Switch", to give it a personality he said. In reality he grew up in America's heartland, the only boy amongst three sisters, who idolized him, he attended Middletown High School, Class of 1953 – dubbed by the class at the time "The Luckiest Kids in the World", most of which had started in grade-school together. It was a community blessed with the generous patronage of Armco Steel and popular figures in the arts and music including the McGuire Sisters and Rosemary Clooney. Lowell absorbed all aspects of art and music available while at the same time working in the steel mill as a summer job. A nearby church exposed him to the delights of organ music; while he struggled with keyboard his passion for the organ was born and became life-long.

Mentored at every stage of his education by teachers who recognized his talents and potential he was afforded opportunities to explore his interests in choral music, organ, theatre arts, and design. Enrollment at the University of Cincinnati led almost immediately to a recommendation to Parsons School of Design in New York after flirting with

enrolment in the Westminster Choir College at Princeton. At Parsons he excelled; he was creative and meticulous in his design detailing; he was fully prepared for a career in interior architecture and design. A chance meeting with Agent John Harkrider ("You have a million-dollar face") propelled him into the world of modeling with the Huntington Hartford Agency, the precursor of the Ford Model Agency. A career of more than ten years with the Ford Agency in New York and Hawaii made him a recognizable face of Coca Cola, Marlboro, Salem cigarettes, Kodel fibers and many, many more in newspapers, catalogues, magazines and television. It took him to wonderful places with wonderful people. While all this was going on in his life he rounded out his formal education with attendance at the Yale School of Lighting and a Bachelors degree in Education from New York University. The era of "Mad Men" was his era!

In 1960 a desire to move out of the fast-paced world of New York to an environment he expected to be more favorable to a new marriage and a one-year-old daughter, led him to Hawaii – inspired by his love of the famous "Hawaii Calls" radio program. With a position at Theo. H. Davies, his family followed. He loved Hawaii, but his wife did not. After a move to San Francisco the marriage failed. Lowell stayed on with the Herman Miller Company and continued to model, eventually moving back to New York. In 1964 he was asked to return to Honolulu to undertake design projects within the Hawaiian Village, then owned in partnership with Henry Kaiser and Fritz B. Burns. For the ensuing sixteen years he was in-house designer for Hilton Hotels in Hawaii, leaving in 1980 to join Honolulu designer Mary Philpotts as her partner, then branching out to specialize in Lighting Design in partnership with Marylou Carter for 10 years. In 1991 Lowell formed Barnhart & Associates which subsequently evolved into Barnhart-Shuckburgh by merging with the design practice of partner Brian Shuckburgh. Lowell was elected a member of the American Institute of Interior Designers (AID) in 1970. When

it evolved into ASID (American Society of Interior Designers) Lowell was a full professional member. He became a member of the IALD, the International Association of Lighting Designers, the world-wide professional organization with whose members he enjoyed great camaraderie. All aspects of his career led to enriched relationships with clients and cohorts.

Easter 1960 was Lowell's first encounter with St. Andrew's Cathedral; it was to take significant hold of his life! Introduced to Honolulu by Henry Damon and Dr. John Stocker, he developed a close bond with Hawaii's Episcopal Bishop Harry Kennedy and Katherine his wife. Bishop Edmund Browning drew him into more regular attendance at St. Andrews with projects of mutual interest. By the arrival of Dean Knight in 1984, Lowell had been elected to the Cathedral Chapter and was a member of the Gifts and Memorials Committee. A long stint on the Buildings & Grounds Committee followed. However, the creation of an adult Acolyte Guild by Rev. Eric Potter propelled Lowell into the lead, from which position he took on all the responsibilities of the Cathedral Verger, beginning with scheduling, then teaching, then liturgy planning and liturgy participation. Sunday was at least an eight-hour work day for the Verger, a job he loved. In addition to the numerous clergy and committee meetings the Verger attended, Lowell actively contributed his talents and leadership to the oversight of the Buildings and Grounds of the Cathedral, including lighting design which led to the first comprehensive illumination of the Cathedral Close and updating of all interior lighting, most particularly in the Cathedral. His love of music and attention to the transmission of the spoken word led him into the world of sound electronics for liturgy, recording, and the hearing-impaired. As Verger he ran a tight ship – anything visual and or audible had his full attention, but most important of all to him was the cadre of individuals who volunteered to participate as Acolytes, Lay-Readers, and Eucharistic ministers in support of the Clergy for all Services in the Cathedral. He cosseted, cajoled, taught and

loved them. For eighteen years he served, until his body told him to slow down. He was formally invested with the title of Verger by Dean Peter Courtney, All Saints Day 1996. At his retirement Dean Ann McElligott bestowed the title of *Verger Emeritus* on the man she designated as the Dean's Verger from the time of her arrival at St. Andrew's.

Lowell leaves his dear daughter, Liz of New York City – made known to all as the most special person in his life – and her husband Joseph, his grand-children Ryan and Bryn, his sister Beckie with her husband Tim and their extended family of children and grand-children, and Brian, his spouse of thirty-seven years.

Condolences may be offered to the family below.

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