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Mark Allam, Carriage Enthusiast

There are many many wonderful memories of the different driving events over the years that Mark and Lila Allam hosted or sponsored. As I recall, Mark really became interested and involved in the sport of carriage driving when William Goldman generously gave his carriage collection to New Bolton Center. It is worthy to note that some of the carriages were used in the production of the movies of Metro Goldwyn Mayer. Mark highly valued a Landau made in Paris, France that was owned and used by royalty. There were several Park Drags and a Hunting Phaeton plus many other carriages, but the one Mark used most often was a two seated Surrey. He had a beautiful pair of Canadian Cross-Bred Horses, and you'd see him happily tooling along to many equestrian events.

In the 1970's, Mark and Lila hosted the first of many sumptuous luncheons for the carriages group before driving to the Unionville Races. The races were held late in March so the weather could be quite cold. Thus, the Allams established the gracious tradition of hosting the carriages group. It has continued through out the years except for the change to the fall for the Pennsylvania Hunt Cup Races. In the early years, one would see about a dozen turn out to drive to the races. However, it wasn't long before word spread about the "FUN" we had driving to the race meets. So the number of carriages increased to 30 or 40. The Allams always made sure that everyone enjoyed themselves, and of course they did! In fact, we looked forward to our yearly invitation to the luncheon and races. The Allam Scrapbook can verify this for Mark and Lila took many endearing pictures of their guests and turn outs. This Scrapbook was always out for our enjoyment.

In the summer of 1974, I received a letter from Mark. The Olde City Sunday Committee (Philadelphia 76 Inc.) had invited Mark and some of his carriage enthusiasts to drive in Philadelphia. There was to be an eight square block area free of all traffic for this occasion. That would mean the whips could drive their horses right through all the traffic lights and stop signs. Indeed we thought that was wonderful! Mark was privileged to

drive the Mayor of Philadelphia, Frank Rizzo, in his beautiful Landau. I accompanied this parade with a smart pair of horses and a Spider Phaeton. The carriages and horses were unloaded under the Ben Franklin Bridge. Then we started driving in traffic-free streets on a gorgeous sunny Sunday afternoon. Well, there were over one million people out to take part in this event in this small area. Marching bands, baby strollers, children with balloons and leashed dogs in this crowd of people turned this occasion for us into a nightmare. The carriages hadn't gone a block before they were separated and on their own. Mark and I recalled that it was so crowded that the horses literally couldn't take a step. Parents had even strapped their children on their backs. The children's balloons, in their outstretched arms, were bouncing off the horses' heads as they tried to duck and miss them. All the horses behaved magnificently! In desperation, we drove to where we were able to get out of this horrendous crowd and into automobile traffic. Then we trotted along keeping up with the snail paced traffic. After Mark

delivered his honorable guest to his destination, we headed back to the vans under the bridge. It was a disastrous Olde City Sunday for us and more so for the horses. The event held in early October is now called Super Sunday. That was the last Olde City Sunday for Mark and me.

Our next event with Mark Allam was in Philadelphia on Friday, November 15, 1974. It was the 1st City Troop's 200 year celebration. Mark sported his beautiful Landau along with other handsome carriages. We were to transport the hierarchy of the 1st City Troop from the Philadelphia Club to the armory. There were 33 mounted troop members in full dress uniform, some who led the carriages and others who rode as out riders while still others brought up the rear. Mark reminisced that it was a spectacular sight indeed. He recalled that unfortunately there were a few troopers that were over mounted or perhaps extremely new to the saddle. We watched one trooper galloping down Chestnut Street and across 22nd Street, "Hell Bent For Election." The trooper's horse went up



Mark and Lila in "official capacity" at the 1997 American Gold Cup with Dean Kelly.

When I came to the School in July of 1964, Mark Allam was dean and Bob Marshak was department chairman. It was an exciting time for all of us caught up in the growth of New Bolton Center, the development of the new large animal hospital, and in the advancement of veterinary medicine to the level of being an equal partner with the other medical professions. There was never any doubt about who was in charge, but individual initiative and bold departures from past established policies and treatments were encouraged and usually approved with a nod of the head. Mark had a vision of what veterinary medicine could and should be and he had been laying the foundation for it in the years before I joined the faculty. My role was also clear; conceive the ideas and Mark would find a way, by hook or by crook, to pay for their implementation. Anything was possible, but we had to pull together with all of our collective energy to make the changes and see them

through to success, modification, or failure. And, yes, failure was an acceptable outcome, so long as we tried our very best along the way. We knew Mark trusted and respected each of us, and while we might disappoint him, and he was sure to tell us so in no uncertain terms, he never lost faith in us. We all knew where we were headed; to take the giant step to make our School the very best in the world.

Mark enlisted us in his never-ending fund raising programs. On many dark, cold, winter evenings the two of us would head out to make a "fund raising" presentation at a pony club meeting somewhere in the tri-state area. Our audience was typically composed of teenagers, along with a smattering of some who hadn't yet reached that point in life. We would leave apparently empty-handed. While driving home one evening I asked, "Dr. Allam, why do we spend so much of our time speaking at pony club meetings?" Mark's response rings loud

and clear in my memory, as if it was last night, not 30 years ago. Without hesitation he said, "always remember Bill, they grow up, you know."

On another occasion in the 1980's, I was flying home after a speaking engagement and sitting next to me was a man who lived in Media, PA. He asked if I knew Dr. Allam. He related that Dr. Allam had cared for his cat (in the 1940's) and on repeated occasions Dr. Allam had urged him to donate to the School but he never had. To my amazement the man opened his wallet and handed me \$100 cash. He said, "over the years, every time I saw Dr. Allam in the news I felt guilty that I had not donated. Please give this donation to Dr. Allam and tell him better late than never." I passed on the donation and after I related my story, Dr. Allam finished by telling me he remembered the donor, he knew that someday his client would come through with a donation, and to top it off, he told me the name of the cat!

The finest honor that I have received during my career has been to be named the first Mark Whittier and Lila Griswold Allam Professor of Surgery. The chair was made possible through the generosity of Mrs. Betty Moran. She insisted on the chair being named after Mark and Lila because of her long-standing affection for them. As a surgeon, Mark was very proud of this honor bestowed on him and Lila. They were a true partnership and certainly much of the credit for the success of the School rests in Lila's gentle, caring, undaunted support for Mark and the School. They both will be missed, but I know with complete certainty that they were justly proud and satisfied with their life's work and accomplishments.

William J. Donawick, D.V.M.
*Mark Whittier and Lila Griswold Allam
Professor of Surgery*

on the sidewalk and then made an abrupt stop causing the trooper, with his arms and sword in the air, to part company with his horse. Poor guy! The entire event was certainly colorful and spectacular. All the dignitaries were delivered in style, and we went on our way to van home. Mark told about another amusing incident to this story. The committee had found a vacant area, along side of a railroad yard, for us to unload horses from our vans. However, this was where the trains shifted railroad cars from one train to another. Well, the slamming and hooking of railroad cars was quite noisy! That really upset our country horses just off the farm for a visit to the city, so it was an experience to remember.

Mark has done many eventful and interesting things in his life. By sharing and participating in those wonderful experiences with others, he has also transformed the carrying world into a memorable one for numerous people. We salute Mark and thank him for these cherished memories.

Mark and Lila will not be forgotten!

When Mark first came to Penn I was an instructor in surgery. Mark pioneered the advent of modern aseptic surgery from the age-old antiseptic methods at the veterinary school. He was a man of great energy, both light and serious in his manner. The great things he accomplished speak for his determination. My older brother, a physician in the Chicago area, on watching Mark in surgery remarked that his skills were on a par with any of his colleagues. Previous deans of the school all had a wall or barrier surrounding them. Mark's door was always open. We frequently had lunch together at a small coffee shop down the street. Once he invited me to share lunch in the dean's office. He opened his brief case and took out two sandwiches and two apples, most likely prepared by Lila, and offered me one of each.

Mark Allam was a great friend to his students and to his colleagues. He had a warm feeling for us as we had for him. He will be missed.

Harold M.S. Smith, V.M.D., '43

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