



Philip C. Donahue

March 29, 1929 - June 28, 2017

Philip Charles Donahue, 88, of Tinton Falls, passed away on Wednesday June 28. He died at home, surrounded by love and family in his final days.

Phil was a Philadelphia native and a graduate of Temple University (BS Science and Education, 1954) and the University of Pennsylvania (MA History, 1960). He taught high school in Bucks County for 5 years before joining the faculty of Monmouth University in 1960. He taught history at Monmouth for 42 years, serving several years as president of its Faculty Association. He loved teaching and was well known for his provocative lectures and progressive political views.

Phil also loved classical music and opera, traveling (Europe, Cuba, Haiti), reading, history, politics, classic movies, good wine, and baseball (he was a diehard Phillies fan). He wanted Bernie Sanders to win.

Phil was the only child of Harry Donahue and Marie (Wood) Donahue. He married Peggy Crouse in 1952, and they had two children, Philip Jr and Marie. After divorcing, he married Doris Vida (Fox) Weber in 1972 and became stepfather to her two children, Tay and Kristin. He was married to Doris for 43 years until her death in 2015.

Phil is also predeceased by his mother, Marie (1957); his father, Harry (1990);

and his first wife, Peggy (2000). Surviving are his children, Philip C. & Jeanne Donahue of Neptune City, NJ; Marie & Mark Rosenthal of Monroe, NJ; Tay Weber & Chrissie Spraggins of Las Vegas, NV; and Kris Weber & Dan Foster of Seattle, WA; his grandchildren, Robert Phillips Jr, Megan Phillips, Victoria Donahue, Kathleen Donahue, and Jacklyn Donahue; and his great-grandchildren, Logan Winter and Skylar Phillips.

Services will be held in the atrium of Seabrook Village in Tinton Falls on Sat July 29, from 1 to 4PM. In lieu of flowers, please commit an act of kindness in Phil's memory.

Phil was interviewed in early 2015 for the "Monmouth Memories" oral history program about his time at Monmouth University. Here is the summary of his recollections.

Monmouth Memories

Date: January 25, 2015

Interviewee: Philip Donahue

Interviewer/Transcriber: Professor Melissa Ziobro

"It was a very important and stimulating time."

After initially dropping out of high school at the age of 16, Professor Philip Donahue graduated from Temple University with a BS degree in Science and Education in 1954. He immediately began teaching at a high school in Bucks County, Pa. He taught there for 4 ½ years, during which time he began graduate work at Penn. After the completion of his Master's in History, Mr. Donahue secured a position at the then Monmouth College in 1960. He taught at Monmouth until he retired in 1992 at the age of 64. Still, he taught Western

Civ part-time until
2002.

Mr. Donahue reflects on his time teaching high school fondly, noting that most academics never receive training in how to educate, or have contact with that type of educational experience. He said the experience taught him “that students are people, and they have feelings, and desires...” He noted that more academics could benefit from this, although “teaching high school is very difficult work” and “I never worked so hard in my life as I did those 4 ½ years.”

A former teacher of Mr. Donahue’s was on the faculty at Monmouth when Donahue applied, and this proved an icebreaker of sorts. The campus struck Donahue as “beautiful;” if a “palatial campus for the quality of education that was being conducted.” In Mr. Donahue’s opinion, “when I first went to Monmouth in 1960, it didn’t strike me as a college, quite frankly.”

He discusses some peculiarities about President Schlaefter (1957-1962) and his administrators, and notes that there was a “great deal of tension” between the faculty and administration.

The formation of the faculty union occurred in the 60s as a result of this tension over issues such as an arbitrary faculty pay system and unfair hiring/continuance/promotion practices.

Mr. Donahue notes the case of Michael Greenberg, a historian whose contract was not renewed after Greenberg dared to question invited speaker General Maxwell Taylor on

the U.S.

government's prosecution of the War in Vietnam. Though Mr. Donahue played but a supporting role in the formation of the union, he would later go on to serve as its President.

Of his tenure as union President, Mr. Donahue cites a faculty strike as a point of pride

(per Donahue, see the FAMCO archive for photos, etc.). The strike, which shut down the school

for about two weeks, led to the ouster of the school's President, and to the faculty, for the first

time, participating in the selection of the new President, Samuel Hays Magill (1980-1993). This

set a precedent for faculty governance. Faculty might not always get their way in how the school

was run, but at least they'd have a say. Pay disparities were also addressed during the strike.

Overall, it "was a very liberating experience," according to Donahue. The new President, Magill,

was a "cultured man" who came from "a broad" educational background, according to Donahue.

His ideas about what a college could and should be meshed much better with those of the faculty

than past Presidents. On his disappointments as union President, Mr.

Donahue feels that he lost a battle with regards to the hiring/continuance process. In his eyes, it remained arbitrary. Many strong teachers and

academics never received tenure – or were never even on the tenure track— for indiscriminate reasons. At several points in the interview, this theme

reoccurs. Mr. Donahue

believes passionately that insisting people live on short term contracts or letting "very good

teachers and promising scholars be without a position” was/is “a terrible thing to do.” He states that the current hiring situation at Monmouth, and the prevalence of part-time and full time non tenure track positions, is the result of a deal brokered between the faculty and administration during this period. He actually resigned as union leader over the faculty’s vote to allow this tiered and often capricious system. Donahue laughingly notes that he is used to people disagreeing with him, though, because he is politically far to the left. In fact, he identifies as a communist—his politics are discussed at several points in the interview. He does not feel that anyone on campus ever treated him differently because of his political views, however. On acceptance and tolerance at Monmouth, Donahue notes that the History Department was particularly forward thinking and progressive in general—although, while he recalls a few women colleagues, he laments that they should have done more to hire minorities. He discusses a past Department Chair, Charlie Mays, at several points throughout the interview, praising a symposia series organized by Mays and the Department to bring speakers to Monmouth to stimulate intellectual life on campus. While Monmouth had a reputation as a “country club” when he first arrived, Donahue notes that the student body became increasingly diverse over his decades on campus. He recalls student activism related to the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War. A large number of students participated in a strike over the war in 1970, in fact,

although Donahue laughs that he is not sure how many were truly trying to engender change and how many just liked the excuse to skip class! As an informal advisor to student activists, Donahue says that he learned much from them, as well. Unfortunately, he thinks the excitement of those days has disappeared, saying, “the hope of the 60s, the optimism of the 70s, is gone.” He feels that people are more apathetic, especially since the draft went away. He thinks people are resigned to the fact that they cannot make a difference because relatively few political actors in this country hold all the power. Some of Mr. Donahue’s favorite classes to teach were German History and modern European History. He even notes that he enjoyed teaching Western Civ. He always felt free to say what he wanted in the classroom, and he often tried to be provocative to elicit a reaction from his students. He taught the first ever Holocaust class at Monmouth, which was a “painful” experience for him because of the subject matter. Despite the passage of years, Mr. Donahue still meets a group of retired Monmouth faculty on the first Tuesday of each month for breakfast.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL **29**. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Atrium at Seabrook Village
3000 Essex Road
Tinton Falls, NJ 07753

Tribute Wall

DD

“ *Dear Marie, Phil, Chrissey, and Tay,*

Phil was the best of friends, a commanding conversationalist, witty, and loyal. His superior intellect, empathy, and consideration were deeply appreciated and will be missed.

Please accept my sincere sympathy.

Diane DeLoche

Diane DeLoche - July 29, 2017 at 05:53 PM

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“ ****no signature needed*** purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Philip C. Donahue.*



*****no signature needed***** - July 27, 2017 at 01:49 PM

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“ *****no signature needed*** purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Philip C. Donahue.*



******no signature needed***** - July 27, 2017 at 01:46 PM

BH

“ *Bongarzone Funeral Home lit a candle in memory of Philip C. Donahue*



Bongarzone funeral home - July 06, 2017 at 06:46 PM

MS

“ *My deepest sympathy and prayers to Mr. Donahue's family. I was a student of his at Monmouth somewhere around 1970 and I remember his love of history. We had to do alot of reading but he deep knowledge of the subject still impressed me. Mr.. Donahue also challenged the administration during turbulent times and stood up to the working faculty members.*

What great professors-

Donahue, Myerson, Flanagan, Miller, Oakes, Mitchell- all dedicated people

Thank you Mr. Donahue-47 years later.

Mike Schulz

Mike Schulz - July 06, 2017 at 10:07 AM

KP

“ *I was fortunate enough to call Phil my friend and colleague when we worked together at Monmouth University. He will be missed!*

Katherine Parkin - July 05, 2017 at 01:00 PM