

Frederick Arthur Halla



1917–2003

Frederick Arthur Halla died Tuesday, November 18, 2003, from complications of congestive heart failure. He was 86 years old.

Fred Halla joined the New England Society in the City of Brooklyn in 1989, and subsequently was an active member of the board of directors. He succeeded William Younger as the Society's historiographer and served in this office until his death.

Born in Harlem, June 21, 1917, Fred attended school in New York and New Jersey before entering West Chester State College in Pennsylvania from which he graduated in 1939 with a degree in education. He also attended the University of Pennsylvania and Boston University, where he earned a master's degree in educational supervision. During World War II he served in the Coast Guard.

As a young college graduate, Fred taught in Pennsylvania and Puerto Rico as well as Maine. He was Superintendent of Eastern District Elementary Schools in Portland, Maine, for many years, and later administered Head Start and other education programs in Maine and New York State.

Fred lived in or visited over thirty countries on five continents, but he returned to Maine frequently and wrote about it often, especially after he moved to Brooklyn and went into the newspaper business. With Dozier Hasty, publisher of the Brooklyn Heights Press and Cobble Hill News, he formed a company known as Eagle Publications. This was in 1996, the year that The Brooklyn Daily Eagle was purchased, and soon after the purchase of The Brooklyn Record (1992) and The Brooklyn Phoenix (1996). He was editor of the Eagle, Record, and Phoenix until his death. In fact, he wrote an editorial, "Confessions of an Old Lobsterman," which appeared in the same edition of the Eagle that announced his death on page one.

A candidate for Congress from Maine in 1966, Fred was extremely active in a wide range of civic and non-profit organizations. These included local, regional, and national offices in professional organizations, the Kiwanis Club, the Girl and Boy Scouts of America, and the Salvation Army. Civic activities in Brooklyn included service on the boards of directors of Respect for Law Alliance, the Municipal Club, the Brooklyn Club, and the New England Society in the City of Brooklyn. From 1992 to 2001 he was a featured speaker at the annual Battle of Brooklyn Memorial Service in Fort Greene Park and at Green Wood Cemetery. He was speaker and Man of the Year for the 1997 Brooklyn Memorial Day Parade. In 1996 he received the Distinguished Service Award of the Brooklyn Chapter of the American Red Cross, and in 1999 he was an honoree at the American Lung Association's annual dinner in Brooklyn.

Fred Halla was married to the late Doris Smith Halla. He is survived by their two sons and five grandchildren. His older son Jan lives with his wife, Mary Lou Halla, in Maine. Their children Cherise and Lori live in Florida and Virginia, respectively. His son Lee lives in Ireland with his wife Dawn and their three children Kristin, Konrad, and Jamie.