

THE TEACHING EXCHANGE

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The Dedication of The Frederick Lippitt and Mary Ann Lippitt House

At a ceremony held on April 20, 2007, 96 Waterman St., home of the Sheridan Center was named in recognition of the extraordinary commitment and noteworthy philanthropy to Brown University of siblings Frederick Lippitt and Mary Ann Lippitt. Vice-Chancellor Marie J. Langlois '64 accepted the dedication of the building to the Lippitts on behalf of the Corporation. President Ruth J. Simmons spoke warmly of the many important contributions of both Frederick and Mary Ann Lippitt to the Rhode Island community, whether in the areas of education, social service or professional achievement. Timothy T. More, Esq., P'96, responded to this great honor on behalf of the Lippitt's extensive family with some anecdotes which exemplified their commitment to the well-being of all who knew them. President Simmons unveiled the plaque which is hung in the entrance to The Frederick Lippitt and Mary Ann Lippitt House and the assembled gathering gave a toast to the Lippitts. Amongst those present were incoming Chancellor Thomas J. Tisch '76; incoming Vice-Chancellor Jerome C. Vascellaro '74; Senator Lincoln Chafee '75; Henry D. Sharpe '45 LLD'70 hon., P'77, P'78, PMAT'86; RI State Senator Lila Sapinsley and Alumni Corporation member Hannelore Rodriguez-Farrar '87 MA 90.

The Lippitts were scions of a family who served the citizens of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations for generations in a wide variety of positions. They were the children of United States Senator Henry F. Lippitt and Lucy Hayes Herron Lippitt, sister in law of President William Howard Taft. They were the grandchildren of Governor Henry Lippitt and the niece and nephew of Governor Charles Warren Lippitt and cousins of the late U.S. Senator John Chafee and Senator Lincoln Chafee '75.

Frederick Lippitt (1916-2005), who was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree in 1977, served the University as a member of the Corporation Board of Fellows and Board of Trustees, Fellow of the John Carter Brown Library, and member of the Advisory Board of the Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning. As a civic leader, politician, educator, philanthropist and army veteran, he devoted his life to public service.

He graduated from St. Marks School, Yale University '39, and Yale Law School '46. He interrupted his studies at Yale Law School to join the Army during World War II. He served in the Philippines and Italy, and received a bronze star and a purple heart. During the



L-R: Simmons, Vascellaro, Tisch, T. More, Lippitt Dedication plaque, Langlois, R. More

Korean War, he served two years in Germany. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel and the commanding officer of the Rhode Island National Guard 103rd Field Artillery in 1963.

After law school Mr. Lippitt returned to Providence to join the law firm of Edwards & Angell. He was a partner in the firm for thirty years and served twice as head of the firm's executive committee. He served on the boards of the Gorham Company, Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank, Keypoint Life Insurance Company, the Quill Company and the Meehan Fund. He was Vice Chairman of the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

He served as a member of the Rhode Island House of Representatives from 1961 to 1983, including ten years as House Minority Leader. He worked for improved government procedures, Medicare for the elderly, and stronger open meeting and conflict of interest laws. Influenced by his experience in World War II, he strongly supported minority rights and was particularly instrumental in the passage of Rhode Island's Fair Housing Practices Act of 1968.

He ran unsuccessfully for Mayor of Providence three times, losing by only a few hundred votes in 1984 and 1990. His opponents recognized his commitment to the people of Providence. Mayor Joseph Paolino appointed him a judge of the Housing Court for 1989-90. From 1985-1989 he served as Director of the Department of Administration for the State of Rhode Island.

For fifty years he devoted himself to charitable and civic causes, including serving as senior Fellow of Brown University, Chairman of the Board of Rhode Island Hospital, Chairman of the Board of the Providence Plan, Head of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of St Mark's School.

In his service to Brown University, he was particularly committed to undergraduate education, the Department of Public Policy, minority affairs, the John Carter Brown Library and the improvement of the campus. At his death he was the last lifetime Fellow. He was an early supporter of the innovative Metropolitan Career and Technical School in Providence. He also served on the Boards of the Rhode Island School of Design, the Nature Conservancy,

the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, the John E. Fogarty Foundation for the Mentally Retarded, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Providence, the Trust for Public Lands and the Southside Community Land Trust. As part of his vision for Providence, as Chairman of the Providence Plan, he led the effort to raise over twelve million dollars to restore the Woonasquatucket River and the adjacent greenway that now boasts three parks and the Buttonhole Golf Course.

Mary Ann Lippitt (1918 – 2006) was a path-breaking aviator and owner of Lippitt Aviation. She graduated from the Foxcroft School in 1936. As a teenager she enrolled in the first Gray Ladies training class and the first nurses aide class for the Rhode Island Red Cross. She took special Red Cross training at Ft. Devens during World War II for work with psychiatric patients. In 1944 she learned to fly and in 1946 formed Lippitt Aviation at Hillsgrove Airport, now T. F. Greene Airport. During the 26 years she owned the company Miss Lippitt taught flying and operated a charter flight service with a fleet of up to four planes. The GI Bill financed the tuition of many of her early students. A Providence Journal article from 1946 on Miss Lippitt's new business reported that "her personality must have been designed to win the friendship and confidence of people who want to fly."

After selling her company, Miss Lippitt devoted herself to charitable and civic causes, including serving as Chairman of the Board of the Greater Rhode Island Chapter, Providence Region, of the Red Cross, President of the Boards of Bannister House and the Women's Center, and Board Member of the Providence Public Library, Gordon School, John Hope Settlement House, the Animal Rescue League, Preserve Rhode Island and Community Prep.

Miss Lippitt made significant donations to many local charities including the Providence Public Library, which has named the exhibition hall at the Central Branch in her honor; Brown University where she funded professorships in the Medical School; and Butler Hospital, where she and her brother made a leadership gift to fund the new building, named in the Lippitts' honor, which houses the Senior center for the treatment of Alzheimers and other acute psychiatric illnesses

Individually and together, Frederick Lippitt and Mary Ann Lippitt generously supported many civic and educational causes. Their leadership in establishing a Senior Treatment/Geriatric Care Specialty Unit at Butler Hospital was recognized when the building was named in their honor. At Brown they established the Anton/Lippitt Fund for Public Policy at Brown University. The University recognized their services to the community by awarding them the President's Medal in 2004. Upon their respective deaths, the Lippitts left a legacy of support that includes, among others, four endowed professorships, an endowment for the Sheridan Center, and an endowment for women's athletics. The Sheridan Center endowment funds professional development opportunities for faculty and graduate students that will help ensure enduring excellence in undergraduate, graduate, and medical education at Brown.

The Lippitt House at 96 Waterman Street stands as a testament to the Lippitts' commitment to education as the foundation for a responsible democratic society. It houses the Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown University.

Photos:

Frederick Lippitt and Mary Ann Lippitt House– sign on exterior [Photo1]

Lippitt House Dedication April 20, 2007: [Photo2]

L-R: Dedication plaque: Simmons, Vascellaro, Tisch, T. More, Lippitt Dedication plaque, Langlois, R. More