

RI Veterans Cemetery, Exeter, RI



Each Memorial Day, I find myself reflecting upon what this day really stands for, and who it brings me to think about. This Memorial Day, I am reflecting on my father, and on our dear friend no longer with us, Charlotte McLean.

My father, Robert Walpole Minchin, was already out of college and working as a high school industrial arts teacher when America joined Britain and allies and entered into WWII. He and my mom were dating when he was drafted to serve, and they worried greatly about his going overseas to join the fighting. As life went, he remained in NJ throughout the war, serving as a counselor to draftees, helping to interview them and determine the best ways for them to serve in the Army – but the stress of the war caused him to develop ulcerative colitis, which eventually many years later took his entire colon in order to avoid colon cancer. He bravely dealt with a full colostomy the rest of his life, eventually dying of pancreatic cancer at age 81. He is buried, along with my mother, in the RI Veteran's Cemetery.

Charlotte McLean was a long-time member of UUCSC, and was loved by so many in our community. Her life was dedicated to serving as a child-placement specialist for adoptions from overseas, for children and families who sought to start a new life together. She was spunky and outspoken, and a great lover of Dining for Dollars. Charlotte passed on a number of years ago, but I remember that during every Memorial Day service she would come up during Joys and Concerns and speak about how we needed to remember all of the brave and dedicated persons who served in the military and gave their lives in this service. It was a reminder that the preservation of democracy is a difficult and often painful process, but something that is so very valuable and is worth sacrifice.

As Memorial Day approaches, I think about Charlotte, and Robert, and the many other souls who I loved and miss. There are many members and friends of UUCSC who have passed on, but still live in our hearts. To recognize them, Etta Zasloff and I are planning to establish an "In Memoriam" page on the UUCSC website, where we will share photos and short descriptions of UUCSC members and friends who have passed on. We invite you to submit names, along with a photo and description (UUCSC affiliation, passions, life's work, etc.) to Etta zasloff.etta@gmail.com or myself elizabethmdalton@gmail.com. Once information has been received, we will begin to set up the "In Memoriam" page. Thank you.

Betsy Dalton
May 28, 2021