Eternity and the Horseshoe Crab By Sam Berliner III

Last night, as I stood on the sea wall at the beach and wondered at the suck of the Sound and the color and organisms that, accelerated by the incredible heat, multiplied to form a "red tide", there came the great grand-daddy of all horseshoe crabs.

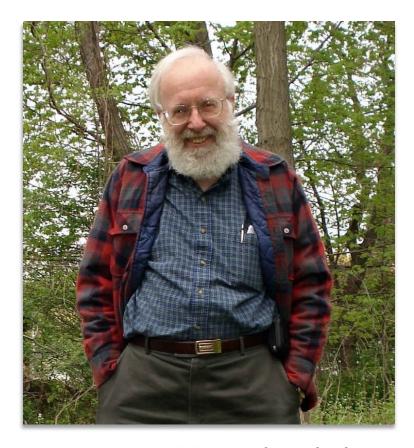
Floating along listlessly, propelled hither and yon by the waves, he was the biggest specimen I ever recall seeing; so big that he had a mantle of good-sized barnacles, some fifty to a hundred of them, which in no way diminished his appearance, but rather emphasized it. There was a hole in his carapace, rough shaped, about the size of a nickel, and the seawater squirted in and out with each wave. The littoral drift carried him along slowly and the waves pulled him back and forth. His enormity in shape and age pulled at me and I toyed with the idea of lifting him from the water. Would he desiccate properly before rotting? What would I do with such a giant, anyway? Had he died long since of the blow that holed his back or had the red tide done him in? Had he, perhaps, died of sheer old age, which well he might have done? So many unanswered and unanswerable questions, as in all of life!

So, I stood there, still unmoving, and thought of time, of the immense span which this once-living fossil represented, of the great changes which have been wrought in his own lifetime, and, of course, of the changes sweeping over me, here and now.

And, as I pondered weightily on such matters, he slowly turned away and sculled gently but powerfully against the tide into deep water. Perhaps he was aware of me, looming above him and decided that, since I made no move, I was not alive and, therefore, not worth the attempt at communication after all.—Sea Cliff, Long Island, New York, 23 July 1980

The foregoing was given publicly first as a reading for a service presented by the author at the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Church in Plandome, Long Island, New York, on 10 August 1980 and again at the Muttontown Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Muttontown, Long Island, on 17 January 1988. It was also published in the 1985/86 issue of OUTGROWTH, a literary journal from Plandome Press

Visit www.sbiii.com for more of Sam's writings



A Service in Celebration of the Life of Samuel "Sam" Berliner, III

February 15, 1934 ~ December 29, 2020

The Winchester Unitarian Society
October 17, 2021

Gathering Music Schmücke Dich, o liebe Seele, J.S.Bach Nocturne Op. 9, No. 1 in Bb minor, Frédéric Chopin

Ringing of the Bell

Prelude Theme from Symphony in D minor (Second Movement), César Franck

Invocation & Welcome

Chalice Lighting - by Sam Berliner, III ("With thanks to Shakespeare and Webster Kitchell")

Read by Natalie Cordes, Lit by Eric Cordes; Grandchildren

Reading— "Invictus" by Ernest Henley
Read by Geoff Ottens, Nephew

Doxology - Old Hundredth arr. C. W. Reese, 1935, after Isaac Watts, 1719, Ps. 117 and Luke 2:14

From all that dwell below the skies, Let faith and hope with love arise, Let beauty, truth, and good be sung, Through every land, by every tongue. Amen.

Doxology is one of the oldest worshipful songs in regular use today; this text is a classic old Unitarian version of Isaac Watts adaptation, from around 1700, of Psalm 117 with a touch of Luke 2:14, set to the 16th Century music of Thomas Tallis' famed Canon.

Eulogy The Rev. Heather Janules
The Rev. Lilia Cuervo

Hymn Calm Soul of All Things

Calm soul of all things, Make it mine,
To hear above the city's jar,
That there exists a peace of thine,
Man did not make and cannot mar. Amen

Personal Reflections

Nancy Cordes, Daughter Beth McKinnon, Daughter Geoff Ottens, Nephew Harris Gibson, Friend

Offering Shani Hernandez and Astrid Joehnk

Musical Meditation Pilgrim's Chorus, Richard Wagner

Brendan Buckley, Peter McEntee, Ken Silber, John Kramer

Meditation "Eternity and the Horseshoe Crab" by Sam Berliner, III, Read by Beth McKinnon, Daughter

Musical Meditation Pie Jesu, Gabriel Faure

Cheryl Medeiros-Nancarrow, Soprano

Benediction "My Benedictuus" by Sam Berliner, III

Recessional Rank by Rank

Rank by Rank, written ca. 1899 as an Anglican hymn by John Huntley Skrine, an Anglican cleric, is set to music attributed to Sir Henry Walford Davies ca. 1923 and is the traditional processional anthem sung at every UU GA Service of the Living Tradition.

Please remain after the service for a reception. Information will be provided during the Welcome.

The Rev. Heather K. Janules, Officiant John Kramer, Director of Music

A recording of today's service may be found at www.tinyurl.com/wuslivestream

In the event of a positive COVID diagnosis shortly after attending today's service, please contact the WUS office at office@winchesteruu.org or 781.729.0949 so we may follow our contact tracing protocol.