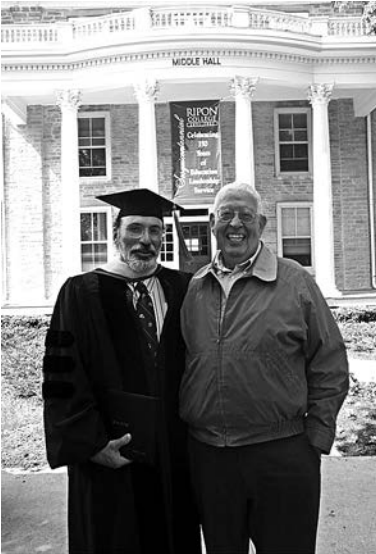


IN MEMORIAM

NEIL A. HARRIMAN 1938–2018

Editor's Note: Neil A. Harriman served as the editor of *The Michigan Botanist* (now called *The Great Lakes Botanist*) from 1998 to 2005. We are pleased to publish this memorial by one of his students, Thomas L. Eddy.

Neil Arthur Harriman, teacher and scientist, died at home on December 7, 2018 after a rather lengthy decline in his health.



The author (left) with Neil A. Harriman attending the Ripon College sesquicentennial commencement in 2001. Photo credit: Linda C. Eddy.

Neil A. Harriman was born on August 1, 1938 in St. Louis, Missouri, the only son of Ruth and John Harriman. He grew up in St. Louis along with his older sister, Ruth. Neil received his Bachelor of Arts from Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1960, followed by a Doctor of Philosophy in Biology from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, in January 1965.

While at Vanderbilt, Neil met Bettie Ralph, and they were married on July 13, 1963. Together, they moved to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in September 1964 when Neil joined the Biology Department faculty at University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh (UWO), primarily to teach botany classes and conduct research in plant taxonomy. Neil remained at UWO until his retirement in May 1998.

Neil was a dedicated teacher and found great satisfaction, not only in teaching plant taxonomy, but also in assisting students to become critical thinkers and life-long learners. His research work of collecting, identifying, and conserving plants was paramount and was a pleasure to him. When Neil arrived on campus in 1964, the herbarium facility in Halsey Science Center was scarcely more than a room with cabinets waiting to be filled with dried, identified, and properly labeled plants arranged in a systematic fashion. Today the herbarium houses almost 125,000 specimens from around the world, including over seventy type specimens. Following Neil's retirement, the university named the herbarium in his honor. The Neil A. Harriman Herbarium contains not only plant specimens, but also Neil's extensive personal botanical library as well.

Neil belonged to numerous botanical societies during his career, including the American Society of Plant Taxonomists, for which he served a three-year term as Secretary and Program Chairman, and the International Association for Plant Taxonomy. His combined love of plants and language ensured updated and correct nomenclatural changes that were regularly reported.

Neil also served as Editor of *The Michigan Botanist* for many years, and as a reviewer and author for the Flora of North America project. During his professional career, Neil's contributions to botany included numerous published scientific papers in the journals of these societies. In addition, his colleagues have named three species in his honor: *Flyriella harrimanii* R. M. King & H. Rob., *Lundellianthus harrimanii* Strother, and *Phyllanthus harrimanii* G. L. Webster.

During his 34 years as a member of the UWO faculty, Neil received a number of awards and recognitions. He was awarded the Citation as an Outstanding Teacher for the school year 1973–74. In May 1986, Neil was named a John McNaughton Rosebush University Professor for Excellence in Teaching and Professional Achievement. In 1993 he received the UWO Endowment for Excellence—The TRISS Endowed Professorship. Upon his retirement in 1998, Neil was named Professor Emeritus of Biology and Microbiology at UWO by the Board of Regents, whereupon he continued to work in the herbarium as long as his health allowed.

Neil's joy of editing the written word extended beyond botany, as did his willingness to help out when needed. During his retirement, Neil joined his wife Bettie as co-editors of the quarterly journal, *The Passenger Pigeon*, of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology from 2003 to 2014. He also contributed his editing skills to the production of the *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Wisconsin*, a 600-page book published by the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology in 2006. Perhaps most importantly, he served for eight years as editor of *The Michigan Botanist*. Whether as an editor, teacher or scientist, Neil was a stickler for minutiae and doing it correctly the first time—his work ethic was impeccable.

Forty years ago, as a young graduate candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, I was encouraged by Neil to conduct a systematic study of the vascular flora of Green Lake County, an under-collected area of the state. My thesis research and continuous association with Neil resulted in a profound change in my life trajectory, both personally and professionally.

Apart from our independent plant collecting, Neil and I participated in numerous botanical outings organized by the Botanical Club of Wisconsin. Neil's taxonomic knowledge was encyclopedic. He exercised a superlative command of language and proper use of grammar. Whether in lecture or private conversation, he could turn what first appeared to be a collection of unrelated facts into a coherent, relevant lesson, frequently accompanied by humorous observations.

Neil was an unpretentious and modest person, preferring not to draw attention to himself. In 2009, the herbarium that Neil founded in 1964 was dedicated in his honor: the Neil A. Harriman Herbarium. While such an honor might induce one to grandstand, Neil avoided the opportunity entirely at this ceremonious tribute. In fact, it is fair to say that Neil would disapprove of this memoriam and the accompanying accolades.

The natural world was held in reverence by Neil. Whether botanizing a nat-

ural area, roadside right-of-way, or a parking lot, his eye was trained on the ground. Besides collecting new plant records, Neil regularly collected and properly disposed of other people's litter.

Neil gifted generously to his local animal shelter. He held a tender spot for cats and dogs waiting to be adopted. On numerous occasions I witnessed a similar mindfulness in Neil toward other peoples' lives whose unfortunate circumstances were less than ideal. He was generous and big-hearted, contributing to the common good. For all this, I owe Neil a debt of gratitude for his mentorship and unflagging friendship.

Rest in peace Neil A. Harriman, and to borrow a phrase from him when parting: *Thank you for the pleasure of your company.*

—Thomas L. Eddy
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APPENDIX RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS OF NEIL A. HARRIMAN

Neil did not keep a record of his publications. The following list has been compiled by the author and the editor from available sources and is likely incomplete. Not listed here are a large number of book reviews, primarily in the journals *Economic Botany* and *The Michigan Botanist*.

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