

Uncle Jack's Speech at Corning Event on 12/10/15 Honoring Gordon Fulcher

Thank you, Dr. Mauro, for inviting us to be here today. What a joy it is to come back to my childhood home and be a part of this special occasion honoring my father!

My father has always been my hero and I have always appreciated the fine example he set for me. I know very little of his professional work because he was very humble and did not share much about his work when he came home. But, I would like to share a glimpse of my father's private life.

Dad's years at Corning were highly successfully professionally. But, they were difficult years in his private life. My mother left our family to pursue her own career when I was very young. I remember Dad coming to my bedside to tell me that Mother would not be coming back to us. Dad became a single father of two little children. My sister Anne and I were well cared for and Dad did his very best in every way to be there for us. I have read that he read several books on child rearing and then put what he read into practice. First and foremost Dad was a loving and gentle father to us. When I did something wrong he disciplined me in love and always made me apologize. I was seldom the one getting into trouble.

Dad loved to walk! That was probably his favorite hobby. He would go out walking when he had a serious decision to make, often walking in the woods around Corning for miles and miles. He was very interested in the wildlife he observed as he walked and sometimes took a camera with him to take pictures of the birds. He always walked to and from his work. As a little boy I would often wait for him on the front porch and watch for him to come home from work. When he got close I would jump into his arms and we would both laugh.

Dad hired a housekeeper to help with the housework and our care. He chose well because he eventually married the wonderful lady we called Aunt Hilda. It was always the habit of Dad and Aunt Hilda to take a long walk on Sunday afternoons.

I can recall that he also was known to play golf and tennis occasionally.

Dad was steadfast and very focused. When he started a project he saw it through to its completion. He taught me always do my best in every way. He instilled in me a great love for reading. I have very special memories of time spent together when Dad read aloud to Anne and me. He set the example by spending endless hours reading on his own. He made sure we were familiar with the classics, the Bible, and other favorites.

Dad made our birthdays and Christmas extra special. He gave us birthday parties and somehow managed to pick out just the right present. He always put up a tree for us for Christmas. Each year after we went to sleep on Christmas Eve Dad would slip a little gift under our pillows. Anne and I would excitedly find them in the morning and sneak into the bathroom to open them. But, the gifts under the tree could not be opened until after church.

Dad also instilled in us a high priority for learning. He was pleased when Anne and I got good grades. I remember him calling me into the bathroom as he shaved in the morning so he could drill me on my times tables.

Dad must have shielded us from the tough economic times that were going on. I found out later that, for a while, Corning had to pay Dad in shares instead of cash.

Due to his training of us and his strong influence on our own lives, my sister and I were able to make him proud of our own achievements. It was my privilege to be with Dad at his bedside in Washington D.C. when he drew his final breath. It was so sad to say goodbye to my father whom I so loved and admired. Yet, I am so grateful to you, the people of Corning, to keep his memory alive and his legacy lives on. Thank you!