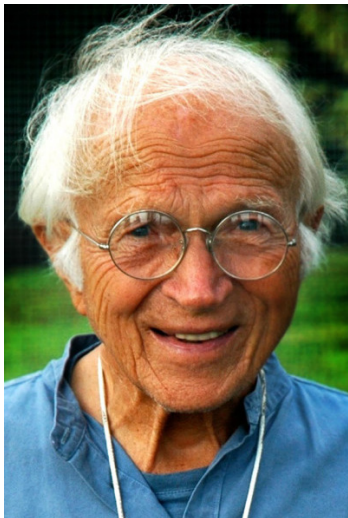




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Arthur Blackman

GCT Trustee 1972–2003



Arthur Floyd Blackman, age 91, of Groton, Massachusetts, died peacefully at home on Thursday, February 5, 2015.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Camilla Cunningham Blackman and their four children: Oliver Blackman and his wife Jenny Wise Blackman, Camilla “Mim” Blackman and her husband Francis Saunders, Phoebe Blackman and her husband Roland Olson, and Isabella Blackman and her husband Andrew Bein. Eight grandchildren also survive him: Alan Blackman, Nina and Alexander Goepfert, Kate, Rose and Daniel Blackman, and Emilychir and Sam Bein. His brother, George L. Blackman, died in 2010.

Arthur was born in Boston, Massachusetts to Floyd and Helen (Lewis) Blackman. When he was a boy, his family lived in Cambridge and Brookline, but he felt most at home at his grandparents’ summer home in Chichester, New Hampshire. It was here, when he was often alone, that his love of the fields and woods of New England was born. He recalled waking on the screen porch to the sounds of the rain and the wind in the trees and quietly slipping outdoors to be part of the morning.

He graduated from the Noble and Greenough School in 1942 and was briefly enrolled at Harvard University before enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Force, in which he served as a pilot and flight instructor. Returning to Harvard after the war, he completed his AB in 1948, majoring in government.

Arthur was in turn a businessman, an educator, a public servant, and an ardent conservationist. In the early 1950s, he managed Symons Paper Company in Gardner Massachusetts. He was president of the Gardner Rotary Club, and served on the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce and of the Henry Heywood Memorial Hospital.



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He left business and returned to school in the 1960s. In an interview in the March, 1992 edition of *The Groton Herald*, he explained, “I wanted to know why people give up personal freedoms in order to achieve greater freedom... also how people form political attitudes.”

While enrolled in the Political Science Department at MIT, and while working on a doctorate in education at Harvard, he taught in Brookline and Newton public schools and became a co-founder of the Cambridge Pilot School, an earlier model of today’s charter schools.

He earned an EdD at the Harvard School of Education, where he was the first doctoral candidate to have a film accepted as a thesis.

When Arthur and Camilla moved to Groton in 1953, he began his involvement in town government, starting in 1959 by serving on the Planning Board. In 1963, during his chairmanship of the board, the first Master Plan of Zoning was adopted. He later served on the School Committee, the Board of Selectman, and the Zoning Board of Appeals; his final participation was as Chairman of the Conductor Lab remediation-oversight committee.

Arthur was a trustee of the Groton Public Library and, for 25 years, the Groton Conservation Trust. He served on the board of directors of the Nashua River Watershed Association and as a trustee of Lawrence Academy. His commitment to participation in the democratic process included never missing a town meeting or an election until it became physically impossible for him to attend.

Arthur tied up his tomato vines religiously every summer, chopped and split firewood in the fall. He plowed snow all winter, with a beloved Newfoundland sitting up in the passenger seat of a rustoleumed, kandy-kolored Jeep truck painted by his teenagers. A stickler for the subjunctive, he instilled a love of language in his children, and both wrote and appreciated wicked doggerel. He had a photographer’s way of finding beauty in the familiar as well as the extraordinary, taking joy in just looking at the clouds. He made powerful coffee, learned to bake crusty bread, and grew 30 varieties of camellias, whose blossoms he delighted in giving away to friends.



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Although he and Camilla traveled all over the world, he loved best to come back to Groton to his home and family.

The family extends great thanks to Arthur's wonderful caregivers: Nicholas Bulega, Henry Masembe, Hannington Mukasa, Lourdel Tebyasa and Fatuma Antonucci, whose excellent support allowed Camilla to continue to care for him at home until his death.

Thanks also to Peg Lorenz of Peaceful Passage at Home (peacefulpassageathome.com) for her help in the days following his death. A celebration of his life will be held on Saturday, March 28th at noon at the First Parish Church of Groton.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to the Groton Conservation Trust,

<http://www.gctrust.org>