

**Muriel Brown
Died July 30, 2008**

Appearing in January 29, 2009 Annual Message

We are committed to continuing the camaraderie that is so intrinsically linked to the volunteerism that carries out our mission. We have continued with our past commitments such as building boats with inner city youth, banding osprey, organizing festivals, updating the website, preparing and delivering presentations, advocating for preservation, conducting ornithological surveys and so much more. In 2009 we enter our 30th year as an organization.

Rather than provide a detailed recap of the past twelve months, I thought I would start where I normally end the annual message – by acknowledging a life, and by relaying a love story. Sometimes the simplest of things escapes us. Many of you may remember Tom Brown – a local woodman of legend. Tom was one of CU’s trustees and he passed away in 1998.

But many of you haven’t known Muriel, his wife of 66 years. Tom and Muriel lived off the land for most of their adult life. In the winters, Tom would trap and hunt and in the spring, he would plant a harvest that would hold them throughout the year. When he married the 17-year-old Muriel, she had lived most of her life in Camden – a “City Girl.” She learned to put up the vegetables from the garden to last an entire year, and to cook the harvest of animals that Tom caught. Nothing went to waste.



Tom and Muriel Brown

When their children became college-aged Tom was middle-aged and he succumbed to the pressures of providing financial security and joined the Wheaton Glass Co. work force. While Tom and Muriel fulfilled the commitment of higher education for their children, Tom continued his communion with the great out-of-doors. He shared his love of nature with all those around him, and built tiny museums in his backyard that collectively easily dwarfed his tiny house. Local school children made regular visits to their home to understand his and Muriel's world. Tom would hold forth in metered prose about his love of nature and Muriel.

He would chide her continually at their wonderful outdoor "cooking events." In a voice that told him to stop teasing and yet simultaneously egged him on, she would simply say, "Oh, Tom, stop." For every amount that Tom was outgoing, Muriel was more quiet, but every bit as good of a host. Her cooking skills were the rave of all who had tried her kitchen fare, be it fried snapper or apple pie. What she prepared in a kitchen in no bigger than a minute defies description.

In July, while I was on vacation, Muriel quietly breathed her final breath. Occasionally, you send a Christmas card to an old friend unaware of the fact that they have gone, and sometimes you get a loving response, as I did from Muriel's granddaughter Diane Baldwin. And it made me reflect on something important, important to Tom and Muriel—"The Woods" that surrounded their tiny home. How dearly Tom loved that woods and how much it provided for them. That "woods" is what CU refers to as the Holly Farm. Tom sought to see the woods preserved for all those school children who visited it so often – not for him, but for future generations. He recited many a poem at public forums advocating that the woods be saved. And somehow Muriel's passing strengthens my resolve and I hope it strengthens our collective resolve to see that 1400 acre woods protected.

Tom was a man of little formal education but he had a way with words and a rhyme– so much so that his poems are part of the Library of Congress's Folklife Collection. Now it seems appropriate to share a poem that Tom wrote for Muriel about the woods.

My Love

By Tom Brown

My wife has often said to me
How lonesome the woods must be.
I answered, No, there is too much to see.
I love the murmur of the trees
As the wind softly stirs the leaves.
The bees flying to and fro,
Gathering nectar as they go.
The cardinal with his coat of red,
The mockingbird singing overhead.
The robin and the little wren
Are among my many feathered friends.
As through yonder laurel I chance to glance,
A grouse is starting to drum a dance.
The otter from the bank that slides,

The mink who hunts a hole to hide.
The deer that drink in yonder stream
I often see them in my dreams.
And though I may never be worth a dime,
I will always have this love of mine.

Muriel Brown obituary

AC Press

Muriel Brown

BROWN, MURIEL, 93 - of Millville, died Wednesday afternoon. Her husband "Trapper Tom" Brown, Sr. died in 1998. Muriel's funeral service will begin 1pm today, Friday, August 1st at the Barr Funeral Home, 2104 E. Main Street in Millville, where there will be a viewing 1 hour prior. Burial will be in Cumberland Methodist Cemetery.

Daily Journal

August 1, 2008

August 1, 2008

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MURIEL BROWN, 93

The Daily Journal

Muriel Brown, 93, of Millville died Wednesday afternoon, July 30, 2008, at the Voorhees Center in Voorhees.

Muriel was born in Millville and was a lifelong resident. She devoted her life to her husband and her family. She loved her life as a homemaker and especially enjoyed cooking for her family. Her husband, "Trapper Tom" Brown Sr., died in 1998.

Muriel is survived by her three children, Barbara Baldwin of Millville, Lorraine Knecht of Gloucester Township and Thomas C. Brown Jr. of Alameda, Calif.; eight grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and five great great-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend Muriel's funeral service 1 p.m. today at the Barr Funeral Home, 2104 E. Main St., Millville, where there will be a viewing from noon to 1 p.m. Burial will follow the service in Cumberland Methodist Cemetery.

Expressions of sympathy may be e-mailed to brian@thebarrfuneralhome.com.