

IARF Council members pay tribute to Roy Smith



Roy Smith (second from right) with Unitarian leaders in 1993
at the global summit of Unitarian leaders in Budapest

Jeff Teagle

With sadness I record the death of Dr Roy Smith, a former Treasurer of IARF and former General Secretary for British Unitarians (1979-1994). He died on 13 December 2011, shortly after returning from a holiday in the Middle East.

Roy was a most distinguished Unitarian General Secretary. I took over from him as General Secretary in 1994 and can verify the quality of his work and the depth of vision that he had for both the Unitarian cause and the IARF. Roy was a true internationalist and made many international friends.

I am sure that there will be many in your respective countries who will remember Roy with affection.

Yoshinobu Miyake

I heard with deep regret of the untimely passing of Dr. Roy Smith. He has been a long-time friend of the Miyakes. He taught me the management of international NGO and how to lead a meeting as Council member like father.

On 13 of December, the day Dr. Roy Smith passed away, is the same day that my parents married (1954) and it is also the wedding anniversary of Konko Daijin (1837) who is founder of Konko-kyo. So, I'll never forget the day.

I have many fond memories of him. Especially, in the summer of 1987, when the 26th IARF World Congress was held in Palo Alto, California, I vividly remember having a Konko/Unitarian Joint Service together with my father (Rev. Tatsuo Miyake), my brother (Rev. Mitsuo Miyake), Dr. Roy Smith, Dr. Eugene Pickett and several Unitarian ministers who came from Hungary & Nigeria at the First Parish in Berkeley where Dr. Richard Boone had worked as minister.

And today it is a great memory that I exchanged views on behalf of My grandfather (Rev. Toshio Miyake) or my father with Roy at meetings over and over when we used to have Council meetings and EC meetings in Frankfurt and Oxford.

I wish to present a song of UUA, as an apopemptic song, "Spirit of Life" that he once taught me.

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close; wings set me free; Spirit of Life, come to me,
Come to me.

May his soul rest in peace.

Wolfgang Jantz



I was privileged to share some moments with Roy Smith 1993 at the global summit of Unitarian leaders in Budapest, which laid the groundwork for establishing a World Unitarian Council. During the whole meeting I felt the strong engagement of Dr. Roy Smith for an international peaceful sharing of the variety our religious commitments.

During the World Summit he expressed very often, that the preparing of a new Unitarian World Council should not allow us to be less committed for the Interfaith Organization IARF.

The best way to honor his work and to preserve his memory is to strengthen our interfaith work.

In mourning...