

## Robert Smiley

According to a family friend, Robert Smiley was “a man of incredible intellect, enormous generosity..., a great story teller, [and] a patriot.”

Bob was born on March 14, 1925, in Canton, Ohio. He spent all of his school years in North Canton and graduated from NoCaHi in 1943. During his senior year, he earned a \$4000 scholarship, but instead went into the U.S. Army. He fought in Europe under General Patton and was in the unit that liberated Dachau Concentration Camp.

When he returned from the war, Bob began attending Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland. While there, he met and married Jane Cadden of Canton. He received a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Chemistry. After graduating, he and Jane moved to Lafayette, Indiana, where he entered graduate school at Purdue University and earned his Ph.D. in organic chemistry in 1954.

Bob went to work for the DuPont chemical company in Wilmington, Delaware. He worked there for 37 years, first as a research chemist and eventually as a Research Fellow. After his retirement in 1990, Bob became an independent consultant in general industrial chemistry. He was especially interested in organic pesticides and worked from his home to invent several which are still available for sale.

Bob has earned 35 U. S. patents for everything from high-energy rocket propellants to organic pesticides. He co-authored the book *Chemistry and the Chemical Industry: A Practical Guide for Non-Chemists* as well as 2 encyclopedia articles and 13 scientific papers.

Bob was a scoutmaster for 15 years during which time he was awarded the District Award of Merit by the Boy Scouts of America and the St. George Emblem for Scouting from the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware.

In 2018, Bob became a social media sensation. He was walking at the Concord Mall – his usual practice – and sat for

a rest on a bench. The Concord Mall Santa noticed his World War II veterans' hat and knelt down in front of him to convey his appreciation. A nearby woman took their picture and posted it online, and Bob eventually told his story on Good Morning America. He and Santa spread a great deal of Christmas joy that year.

Bob and Jane had 10 children. All 10 are college graduates and have a combined 9 Masters degrees and 1 Ph.D. They had 26 grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. Jane passed away in 2015 after struggling with dementia. Bob passed away in August of 2021 at the age of 96. According to his obituary, "he died a contented and happy man."

Robert Smiley's achievements in the area of Chemistry are exemplary. It is with gratitude that the North Canton Alumni Association receives him into its 2024 class of the Hall of Distinction.