

Heikki Seppa
March 8, 1927 - May 18, 2010

Heikki Seppa, passed away on Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at his home on Bainbridge Island, Washington. He was born on March 8, 1927 in Sakkijarvi, Finland and was 83 years of age.

He was an extraordinary man, innovator, artist, teacher and husband. A life well lived with focus, struggles, and, in spite of himself, success! Many of Heikki's friends and students can attest to his genius as well as the occasional capricious antics. As a child he was abandoned at the age of five and housed in a home with 100 other children.

Heikki was the longest resident there, when at the age of 14 he was selected to attend the newly formed Goldsmith's School in Helsinki. Opting for the strenuous Silversmith path allowed Heikki to create large installation sculptures, wondrous tabletop and ecclesiastical pieces, and countless wearable jewelry designs. Many of his pieces are in private collections, museums across the country as well as the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

After emigrating to Prince Rupert in B.C. in 1950 and living there for ten years, he and his first wife moved to Bloomfield Hills, MI so that he could attend Cranbrook Academy of Art to learn the language of metalsmithing in English. He taught in Louisville, KY from 1960-1965, when he was offered a full tenured position at Washington University, St. Louis, MO. Heikki lived and taught there from 1965-1993 when he retired and suddenly became a widower.

In 1998 he found himself moving to Bainbridge Island, WA to be with his new wife, Laurie A. Lyall. He expressed his love of being on Bainbridge by building his dream house which exposed his fascination and affinity to curvilinear lines. After many years of enjoying his retirement and his wife, also a metalsmith, he suffered three progressively debilitating strokes. He died at his home surrounded by loved ones.

Heikki made an impact and greatly influenced the people around him, though he would never have taken credit for that. He is deeply missed by his wife, Laurie A. Lyall, sister in-law Carrie McCann, Kathy Lyall-Cooper, Paul Cooper and niece Erica Cooper of Bainbridge Island; family members Ernie, Donna, Samantha and Joe Seppa of Seattle and Allan and Sue Seppa of MA.