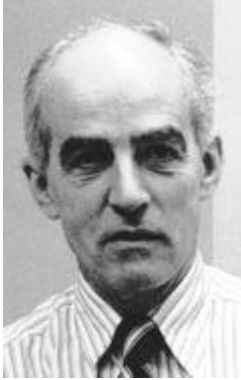


## Half Staff – Bernard A. Koechlin

February 24, 2010



ROCKPORT — Bernard Alphonse Koechlin, husband of Patricia Baker Koechlin, died peacefully in Rockport on Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2010. Born Sept. 28, 1916 in Basle, Switzerland, son of Rev. Dr. Alphonse and Emilie Koechlin-Thurneysen, he spent his first five years in Stein on the Rhine, where his father was minister. In 1921, his father was called to St. Martin's, the oldest church in Basle, and the family moved to the adjacent, centuries-old church house overlooking the Rhine.

Bernard attended the classics gymnasium in Basle, studying Latin and ancient Greek, and developing an intense interest in history. He continued his studies at the University of Basle and in 1943 was awarded a Ph.D. in chemistry, magna cum laude. He spent two subsequent years in the Department of Physiology at the University of Bern where he did research on nerve regeneration. During World War II he served in the Swiss Army.

In 1946, he came to the United States as a Visiting Investigator in the Department of Physical Chemistry at Harvard Medical School. He met his future wife at Harvard and decided to stay in the United States, accepting a position at Sloan Kettering Institute, followed by two years in the Department of Biology at MIT where he did research on the chemistry of nerves. In 1955 he was hired by Hoffmann-La Roche to set up their laboratory for drug metabolism in Nutley, New Jersey. While at Roche, he and his family resided in Montclair, N.J., where he was an active volunteer in civil rights, affordable housing, and services for the developmentally disabled.

Serving as chairman of the Montclair Fair Housing Committee he was a witness in a 1967 precedent-setting legal case where for the first time a victim of housing discrimination was awarded monetary compensation. He chaired the New Community Foundation, raising seed money for affordable housing in the Central Ward of Newark after the 1967 riots. He was a member of the Developmental Disabilities Council of the State of New Jersey, a board member of the NJ Association for Retarded Citizens and of New England Village in Pembroke. In 1992, he and his wife retired to Rockport. He and his family enjoyed many trips abroad, and the family benefiting greatly from his fluency in several languages and from his rich cultural background.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a sister, Ruth Lindt-Koechlin; by six children: Emily of Takoma Park, Maryland; Patrick and his wife Julia of Rye; New York, Nicolas and his wife Catherine of New York City; John of New England Village in Pembroke; Dr. Timothy and his wife Katherine Joyce of Montclair, N.J.; Carl and his wife Beth Nagy of Dorchester; by six grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, eight step-great-grandchildren, and by 15 nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a brother, Georg; and by a sister, Dr. Elisabeth Grossmann-Koechlin.

**ARRANGEMENTS:** He was a member of First Congregational Church in Rockport. A memorial service will be held on Monday, March 1, at 11 a.m. in the First Congregational Church in Rockport. The burial will be private. Contributions in his memory may be made to New England Village, 664 School St., Pembroke, MA 02359. Funeral arrangements are by the Burgess and Mackey Funeral Home, 201 Main St., Rockport. Online condolences may be given at [www.greelyfuneralhome.com](http://www.greelyfuneralhome.com).