

Chris Patton (1916-2008)



The foundation recently lost a longtime member and loyal supporter in Charles Christopher Patton of Springfield, Illinois. He was an active participant in foundation meetings in the 1980s and 1990s and remained supportive of our programs and projects. Friends throughout the foundation will miss him.

Patton, 92, died February 15, 2008, at St. John's Hospice in Springfield. He was born January 6, 1916, in Springfield, the son of Dr. Charles Lanphier Patton and Alice Agee Jess Patton. He was preceded in death by three brothers, Dr. Robert Jess Patton, James William Patton II and John Agee Patton.

Chris, as friends in the foundation knew him, was a graduate of Springfield High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in electrical engineering from the University of Michigan. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1946, where he was involved in convoy duty and anti-submarine warfare. He retired from Sangamo Electric Co. as an electrical engineer.

Patton was a member of First Presbyterian Church and served on the boards of the Sangamon County Historical Society and the Abraham Lincoln Association. He was an ardent sailor at Island Bay Yacht Club, where he raced and served on the race committee and was national champion crew on Rebel Class Sailboats many times. He compiled a five-volume manuscript on his grandfather Charles H. Lanphier's letters titled, "Glory to God and the Sucker Democracy."

He is survived by his nephews, James W III, Thomas, Jeffrey and Stephen Patton, all of Springfield, and Charles Patton of Phoenix; nieces, Penelope P. Gordon of Suttons Bay, Michigan, and Ann P. Meyers of McMurray, Pennsylvania; and several great-nieces and -nephews and great-great-nieces and -nephews.

Patton was a former member of the foundation's board of directors. He remained active in the foundation, frequently communicating with staff in the Great Falls office, and was a very generous donor to our programs, projects and operations.

Memorials may be made to the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403; or First Presbyterian Church, 321 S. Seventh St., Springfield, IL 62701.

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(Patton was a Director of the Foundation, 1981-1987.)

*Prepared by Bob Gatten, 2011*