

JOSEPH A. (JOE) FISHER PASSES AWAY NOVEMBER 8TH, 2001

Long time and very popular Chapter member **Joseph (Joe) Fisher** died at his home in Burlington, on Thursday, November 8, 2001, at the age of 72, after a short battle with cancer. He was born in Burlington on September 18, 1929, the oldest of 14 children. He graduated from Cathedral High School in 1948, and from Burlington Business College. Joe joined the Navy in 1949, where he achieved a storekeeper rating during his four-year term. After the Navy; he worked for the National Biscuit Company, and in 1967 started a 25-year career with the Prudential Insurance Company, retiring in 1991.

Joe loved trains, and pursued this first as a modeler; with a beautiful HO gauge home layout. He branched out into photographing and video-taping trains all over the USA. His ultimate experience was as a conductor on the Lamoille Valley Railroad excursion trains for several years, a glimpse of which we saw on video at the October meeting. Later he worked as a conductor on the Vermont Railway excursion train, the Champlain Valley Flyer from Burlington to Middlebury. When his high school class had their 50th reunion in 1998, Joe organized a ride on that train for his re-unioning classmates, and was in full uniform.

Joe joined the Champlain Valley Chapter in 1990, and later served successive terms on the Chapter Board. He was very active with the railroad industry's "Operation Lifesaver", for which he traveled to schools for safety lectures. He was a volunteer the first year on the National Park Service "'Trails and Rails" program, doing travelogues on the Adirondack and the Vermonter. He served as a commissioner on the CCTA, the Greater Burlington area bus system.

Joe participated in many other activities, such as his church, where he faithfully sang in the choir. Another activity was his part time seasonal business in cleaning and servicing swimming pools and in doing residential remodeling work. A very busy guy.

Joe is survived by his wife of 47 years, Marguerite (Peg), and three children, one daughter having predeceased him. Visiting hours and funeral services were heavily attended by his many friends, co-workers, and family. A poignant moment occurred as Joe's casket was being carried from the church, when a Vermont Railway train blew its whistle at the Flynn Avenue crossing, only two blocks from the church, normally one of the silent crossings.

Joe's warm personality will endure for many years. He was a great conversationalist, who could and did talk easily on wide ranging subjects. His knowledge and experience were broad. He was also an excellent listener. One always felt that learning something from Joe was automatic because he was so well-read. He truly enjoyed what others had to say. The Chapter's condolences are extended to Joe's family. *(Bob Moore and Ed Kilmer)*