

Tribute to Eilene M. Galloway
Memorial Service
Cosmos Club, Washington, DC
June 2, 2009

By

Marcia S. Smith

Many of you know that Eilene and I were very close friends and that we both worked at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), but we didn't work there at the same time. She was retiring just as I was arriving in 1975, so although she was a legend at CRS I really didn't get to know her until some years later.

I am in the fortunate position of having worked with both of the legendary CRS space experts – Eilene, and Charles Sheldon, who is the one who hired me. He was chief of the science policy research division and an expert particularly in Soviet space activities. Eilene worked in a different part of CRS and, generally speaking, when it came to space, Eilene worked with the Senate and Charles worked with the House, though there were clear exceptions to that rule. Charles passed away in 1981 and it was after that that Eilene and I began corresponding on a regular basis and became fast friends.

During these past 30 years or so, I came to know Eilene as a passionate person, especially about her family – of which she was very proud; about CRS and its non-partisan, objective, carefully researched analysis for Congress; and about the space program. When it came to the space program Eilene was dedicated to international cooperation in space, and to preventing space from becoming a theater of war.

She opened many doors for me, especially in international space organizations like the IISL and the IAA, for which I am very grateful. She was also a mentor who helped shape my career. I took a leave of absence from CRS in the mid-1980s to work at the National Commission on Space, and was not planning to return to CRS, where I had worked already for 10 years. I remember clearly her stern voice when I told her I didn't plan to go back. She couldn't imagine working anywhere else and quizzed me as to what job I could possibly get that would provide me with the same opportunities for intellectual growth and service to my country. I couldn't come up with one, so I went back to CRS for another 20 years and it was definitely one of the best career decisions I've ever made.

Most people know Eilene as the expert on space programs that she was, but know little about her personal story. I was honored a few months ago when

Eilene asked me to write her biography. I just wish she'd asked years ago so I could have had more time to get her stories down on tape! I and many other friends and members of her family had been encouraging her to write her memoirs for years, but she was always too busy working on one paper or another!

She lived a good life as Jonathan has recounted, but it was not all roses. All the years I knew her – not just the past year of our recent economic crisis – Eilene talked about the Great Depression and the terrible toll it took not just on her and George, but on people across the country. That journey that she and George took in 1935 to see the effects of the depression on various parts of the country deeply affected her.

And George's death in 1967 and David's in 1993 were obviously very painful.

But Eilene always soldiered on. "You just have to keep working." That was her mantra. And work she did. With help from Linda Billings, she published an op-ed in Space News just three months ago.

Eilene surrounded herself with young people – and even though some of us aren't so young anymore, I think we felt young when we were around her because of her unwavering optimism about the benefits the space program has already brought to the world and those to come. One of her greatest legacies is all of us -- her "pupils" around the world -- who will carry on her work.