



## C. Harry Knowles

January 7, 2020

### C. Harry Knowles

Inventor, entrepreneur and philanthropist, C. Harry Knowles, 91, of Medford, NJ, died January 7, 2020, leaving behind a legacy of improved lives via the technology he created, the jobs he provided, the teachers and students he inspired and through nurturing his family and a wide circle of friends.

He was born August 15, 1928 in Birmingham, AL where he lived until he attended Auburn University in 1944. After a 2-year period in the Marine Corps from 1946-1948 he returned to Auburn from which he received a bachelor's degree in physics in 1951.

He was then granted a master's degree in physics from Vanderbilt University in 1953, following which he joined Bell Laboratories in New Jersey at a time when there was an explosion of technological developments enabled by the invention of the transistor. His seminal work on germanium transistors contributed greatly to Project Vanguard. He continued this work at Motorola in 1958 and then at Westinghouse from 1962 to 1968.

He established his own company, Metrologic, in Blackwood, NJ in 1968 to develop laser technology for bar codes. His inventions ushered in use of handheld scanners including the triggerless, omnidirectional and mini-slot scanner. He held roughly 400 US patents in transistors, lasers and bar code scanning technology.

Dr. Knowles was the recipient of many honors, including induction into the New Jersey Business Hall of Fame, inventor and entrepreneur of the year awards and two presidential “E” and “E Star” awards for export success. In 2006 the College of Sciences and Mathematics of Auburn University conferred a Distinguished Alumnus Award and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007. In 2008 Auburn University’s highest recognition, an honorary doctorate, was bestowed on him

He is survived by his wife, noted pediatric neuropathologist, Dr. Lucy Rorke-Adams, three children, Harry Holmes Knowles, II, of BURLINGTON, Vt, Robert Knowles, of Alexandria, VA and Marjorie Knowles of Asheville, NC. Other survivors include a brother, William PENN of Birmingham, AL, a sister-in-law, Ruth Ramsey, also of Birmingham, several nieces and nephews and other extended family members.

A Memorial Service will be held at The First Presbyterian Church, 101 Bridgeboro Rd, Moorestown, NJ at 11 AM on January 18, 2020.

In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to:  
Music Fund of The First Presbyterian Church 101 Bridgeboro Road  
Moorestown, NJ NJ 08057

# Cemetery Details

**PRIVATE INTERMENT**

## Previous Events

### Memorial Service

JAN 18. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church  
101 Bridgeboro Road  
Moorestown, NJ 08057  
(856) 235-1688  
<http://www.fpcmoorestown.org>

# Tribute Wall



“ C. Harry Knowles

October 09, 2023 at 03:30 AM



“ C. Harry Knowles

November 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *I just had the feeling that Harry had left this world. I was his second wife, then Ursula Knowles, from Germany. Extraordinary what he achieved with Janet Knowles. I am grateful to have known him so closely in his younger years. He was a very special person, whom I will pray for.*

*My late husband was also a very special person, of my age, to whom I was married for 31 years. He died in 2016, so I know what is like to be a widow. And I know how difficult mourning is.*

*So I wish all the best to Harry`s widow, Dr. Lucy Adams and his daughter Marjorie Knowles ( of Asheville?). She was a nice little girl, visiting often Gibson Island long ago with Robert and sometimes Harry II. Do you remember when we cycled the Island there? I still cycle every day.*

*Ursula Kirschner, Beethovenstrasse 17, D 82110 Germering-Munich.*

Ursula Kirschner - November 06, 2020 at 03:05 PM

MK

Dear Ursula,

*I do remember you when I visited you and my father at Gibson Island. I don't remember the bicycle ride, but I remember what a lovely person you were. I've always wondered what happened to you. I was never close to my father, so I never had the chance to get to know you better. I only interacted with him a couple of times before he died (by email and one final brief visit). My father admitted before he died that you had a son by him. I'm wondering how well you and your son are doing now? I'm sure he turned out to be a beautiful person, like you. I'm sorry to hear you suffered the loss of your late husband. What is your son's name? Did he become a physicist or scientist, like my father? Thanks for providing your address. I will write to you later.*

Marjorie

*[P.S. I also had a 'feeling' when my father died. I'm wondering if he 'visited' you from the 'other side', like he did with me?]*

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**Marjorie Knowles** - September 03, 2025 at 12:33 PM

GK

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



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**George J. Kolis** - January 21, 2020 at 09:52 AM

ER

“ The service for Harry was "fantastic". The tribute to him by Rev. Stuart Spencer and the other speakers was moving. I was humbled by HOW great Harry truly was. And I got to see some of my favorite people: Mark, Garrett, John and Janet. Fond memories of Bill, Geoff, Pat and Michael.

*If I did the math correctly, Harry was 16 when he attended Auburn. Twenty five when he received his Masters.*

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**EDWARD ROCK** - January 18, 2020 at 02:07 PM

DW

“ Dave Wilz lit a candle in memory of C. Harry Knowles



Dave Wilz - January 17, 2020 at 08:28 PM

NG

“ Thinking of Harry, bandana around his sweaty brow, genially pitching in to whatever needed to be done at our humble potluck suppers at the Union Church In Tyringham. What a lovely southern gentleman! A privilege to have known him! Prayers for all this family from his Tyringham church friends.

Nini Gilder - January 17, 2020 at 06:19 PM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of C. Harry Knowles.



January 17, 2020 at 01:02 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of C. Harry Knowles.



January 17, 2020 at 11:48 AM

DD

“ Harry whirled into my life in 1972. I was 12 at the time and very hard headed already. I had to learn very quickly how to deal with his “big” personality. We butted heads a lot through our relationship, but we also shared many good times. Harry walked me down the aisle to marry my best friend, Tom in 1986. Harry was there when our boys Thomas Jr. and Patrick were born. We all shared many events together, from births to deaths, lacrosse games and graduations. Thanks Harry for the wonderful memories through your videos and hundreds of pictures you took. I can still see the cameras hanging around your neck and the white handkerchief around your head. There is one profound lesson Harry taught me from day one. This lesson carries through my life to this day. Harry taught me the importance of nourishing your Body, Mind and Soul with food!! Harry was an excellent cook and he shared this gift with family and good friends. That’s the lesson, sharing and nurturing of family and friends with food and good times. Harry made awesome stuffed crepes on Sundays, beautiful turkeys on Thanksgivings and introduced us to some of the best restaurants in the area. Harry had a zest for life and loved to “Celebrate” good times. He always made sure everyone was having a good time. He had Big Dreams, the bigger the better!! Harry’s dreams are making it better today for many Teachers and Students through KSTF/Knowles Teacher Initiative and into the future of education. Harry I wish I could have Thanked You and said Good Bye personally. It was an Honor to be part of your life. May God Bless you and May You Rest In Peace. Love Ya, Diane❤️

Diane Lynam ex-step daughter - January 17, 2020 at 08:42 AM

JL

Well said Diane. He truly was a visionary! And yes he was tough at times, but he really did care about all his employees and made us all feel like family. My heart goes out to you, Donnah, and especially your mom. R.I.P. Harry

Judy Leason - January 18, 2020 at 09:01 AM

DF

“ 30 years ago I walked into a small Mom and Pop company named Metrologic. I didn't know very much about the company or management.

Over the ensuing months, while working with Harry, I found him to be demanding, volatile, tough and rude at times. As time passed, I also saw a man, who could be charming, warm and generous, had a great heart and always, always brilliant.

Over the years, only a rare someone like Harry could have built this tiny company into what it became; a worldwide, publicly traded, successful technology company that employed 1000s of people. I could go on longer about our years together but ultimately I want to say that Harry left us with an indelible and unforgettable legacy.

Harry's relentless drive, brilliance, never give-up attitude was instilled upon us all, and pushed everyone to succeed and become a better person.

I'll keep this brief, and just want to tell you Harry, that it has been my privilege and honor to know you all these past years. You are unforgettable and will be missed by so many of us.

My sincerest condolences to you, Janet. Lucy, you have my heartfelt sorrow and respect. To all of Harry's family and friends, I extend my sincerest sympathies.

*Rest in Peace dear friend,*

*Love*

*Dale*

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**Dale Fischer** - January 17, 2020 at 07:47 AM

JP

*Dale,*

*Beautifully written, I share your thoughts.*

*John Patton*

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**John Patton** - February 09, 2020 at 01:45 PM

HA

“ *Heba Abdo lit a candle in memory of C. Harry Knowles*



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**Heba Abdo** - January 16, 2020 at 06:24 AM

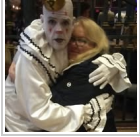
FC

“ *From the 2006 Knowles Science Cohort purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of C. Harry Knowles.*



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**From the 2006 Knowles Science Cohort** - January 14, 2020 at 11:47 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



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**Linda Beyer** - January 13, 2020 at 10:48 PM

“ It was 1967 or 68 when the Edmund Scientific Company switchboard operator called me in the Engineering Office and said, "We've got a guy on the line who wants to build lasers for us." As Director of Engineering, in addition to the development of our own products, I was also involved in the evaluation of new "buy and sell" products for inclusion in our mail order catalog, so I asked her to connect us. At the other end of the line was Harry Knowles, who had recently moved into the area and who thought he could build a low cost helium-neon laser for sale to the educational market. Since our million plus catalog distribution included thousands of colleges, universities and research laboratories, we received a lot of solicitations like this, the vast majority of which came from well-intentioned but less than competent inventors. I told Harry that we would love to have a laser to sell but thousand dollar products usually didn't do well in our product line. He replied, "What if I could produce one to sell for \$200?" As a former physics teacher and general science enthusiast, I had been following laser development, and had just enough knowledge about the problems of building a working laser to know that hitting this low a price point would be extremely difficult, but Harry sound very knowledgeable and confident, so I invited him to visit us and talk it over and we set an appointment. Harry arrived with a notebook full of rough designs and figures and impressed me with his practical intelligence and well thought out plans but no working laser. I told Harry that we would certainly be interested in the product but would need to see a working model. We set tentative specifications for power output and tube life and Harry left. Several months passed before Harry called and said he had a product. The prototype didn't look like much, just an aluminum box containing the electronics and a glass tube that glowed with a red-orange plasma when turned on and shot a thin bean of magical coherent red light across the room. As Harry perfected the product, Edmund Scientific was his testing team. He'd makem and we'd breakem, not physically but to assure his product would have the 200 hour life mutually agreed upon. The next year he had achieved this goal and the Edmund Helium-Neon Laser first appeared in the Edmund Scientific catalog. The Metrologic laser

*became a very good seller for several years, and contributed to the first profits made by his company. Eventually other manufacturers made low cost educational lasers, but by that time Harry and his crew at Metrologic had gone on to make more sophisticated products with much greater sales. Harry was a visionary with the ability to solve difficult technical problems as well as great business and people skills. The last time I talked with Harry was many years ago when he asked me to work in his educational division. I had moved on by then, but the short time spent with him over a half-century ago live on in my memory. My condolences go out to his family and close friends but some comfort surely come from the fact that he lived a long and good life with many contributions to society.*

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**J. Evans Jennings Jr.** - January 12, 2020 at 11:49 PM

JG

“*It is hard to put into words how much Harry means to me and what a difference his generosity continues to make in my life. Working for Knowles is my dream job. Harry's decision to invest in teachers is such a testimony to those who are the heart and soul of education and make a difference every day and in every way. Yet, they are often overlooked or branded as the problem. Harry knew differently; that when teachers have the resources and support to lead educational improvement, change is possible. Thank you, Harry. You have, and will continue to, make a difference for countless teachers and students (although I know you want us to count them!). We may not have found the "holy grail" but there is no doubt that you have had a huge impact on math and science education through the teachers you support and all those they touch. Rest in peace as we celebrate your life and legacy.*

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**Jodie Galosy** - January 12, 2020 at 09:30 PM

MC

“ I am forever grateful to have known Mr Knowles and to have shared in the experience of Metrologic. He provided so many people so many opportunities. Rest in peace. Maureen Caromano

Maureen Caromano - January 12, 2020 at 10:37 AM

BK

“ A good man. Thank you Harry, for all of the opportunities that you provided for us. We had some challenging projects together. Love from, Bill and Jean Kutteroff

Bill Kutteroff - January 09, 2020 at 02:19 PM

DM

“ Saddened to hear of Harry's passing. I was able to personally witness Harry's commitment to teachers and the improvement of science and mathematics teaching. He has and will continue, even with his passing, have an impact on teaching and learning.

Donna Messina - January 09, 2020 at 12:36 PM

MM

“ Marianne Manna lit a candle in memory of C. Harry Knowles



Marianne Manna - January 08, 2020 at 09:27 PM

BG

“ My deepest sympathies to Harry and the family. May he rest in peace.

Bill Glinka - January 08, 2020 at 07:09 PM



“ *Rip Harry 13 wonderful years with at Metrologic I meet family and friends there, we will never forget.*

**Doris Saunders** - January 08, 2020 at 06:34 PM

LB

“ *Sorry to hear of Harry's passing. I worked for Metrologic for 18 years.. He was always nice to me. When I had my breast cancer he took the time out and asked me how it was going...I always felt comfortable around him and was so easy to talk to... Metrologic was a family place and over the years met many friends which I still communicate.... Very Smart Man.....  
... Rest in Peace Harry... My thoughts and prayers are with the family during this time of sorrow.... LOIS BERGIN*

**Lois bergin** - January 08, 2020 at 04:37 PM

HM

“ *Was saddened to hear of Harry's passing. He was a great man and a true friend. RIP Harry a life well lived! I hope you and chic are redesigning heaven!*

**harry monteith** - January 08, 2020 at 12:31 PM

PE

“ *Harry was always a man that was out in the workplace with all the employees, talking to us, letting us know he was there to talk to not just the owner and unapproachable. On our work anniversaries we'd have a lunch with Harry in the conference room to celebrate, talk about anything often sharing laughs. He kept Metrologic a family place and I have made many friends I'm still close to because I was employed there. I was so sad to have been let go after 15 years, all the memories, friends, etc it was almost like leaving home. Rest In Peace Harry*

**Patty Ehrmann** - January 08, 2020 at 10:49 AM

EC

*It was a very unique workplace. I was employed for almost 20 years. Lots of fun memories. He is fondly remembered.*

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**elaine densten connolly(bray)** - January 08, 2020 at 05:17 PM

HB

*Metrologic was the best company i ever worked for. Harry was a great man and boss.*

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**Hope Bowker** - January 09, 2020 at 08:15 AM

JM

*So sorry to hear of your loss! He was such a wonderful warm and caring man. We will miss seeing him at AU! War Eagle! Prayers!*

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**Jennifer Morris** - January 13, 2020 at 01:53 PM

JH

*My deepest sympathies to Harry and his family. May he rest in peace..*

*John Hsu--Singapore*

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**John Hsu** - January 17, 2020 at 04:45 AM

JH

*My deepest sympathies to Harry and his family.May the great man rest in peace.*

*John Hsu-Singapore*

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**John Hsu** - January 17, 2020 at 04:53 AM