



# Homer "Gus" Roberts

April 19, 1912 – April 30, 2006





Born on April 19, 1912, in Onaway, Michigan to Oscar and Maybell Roberts, Homer was proud to call himself the son of a lumberjack. He was teaching in a one-room schoolhouse by the time he was 18 and went on to a life in education, focusing on revealing the wonders of nature to generations of students. A lifelong environmentalist, Homer had a special fascination with birds. He spent his life sharing that fascination with others, eventually becoming president of the Michigan Audubon Society, writing books and producing several nature films.

In 1938 he married Dorothy Steffee, the woman with whom he would share this extraordinary life. Together they built two great families. One consisted of their four sons and two daughters, along with their collective spouses and offspring (not to mention a menagerie of dogs, cats, raccoons, snakes, etc.). The other was made up of the thousands of students whose lives he touched, and the boys and young men who joined them each

summer at Camp Mahn-Go-Tah-See. Here, "Dot and Gus," helped generations find their way through the woods along an endless path of discovery. Through nature hikes, handicrafts and the camp spirit, they also taught fair play, self esteem, teamwork and the value of every living thing. Here too they built their beloved Harvest Hill from which they watched both of these great families grow.

Over the course of his 94 years, as teacher, mentor, naturalist, ornithologist, writer, photographer, illustrator, musician, husband and father, thousands of students knew him as Mr. Roberts, generations of campers knew him as Gus, and a very lucky few have had the great privilege to call him Dad.

Survived by his wife Dorothy, their six children and spouses, a still growing number of grandchildren and great grand children, two brothers and countless thousands of former students and campers, Homer will be remembered by all of us for the way he lived his life, the things he taught us, and most importantly, the things he taught us to see. From the grandeur of the forests to the beauty of each creature that makes up the natural world, and the need to help protect the environment, he opened our hearts as well as our eyes. We will continue to hear his voice in the songs of the birds and the whisper of the wind in the trees.

