

Richard Wainwright



Richard M. Wainwright graduated from Needham High School in 1954. The town was different then and Needham High School was smaller, but Mr. Wainwright remembers the satisfaction of participating in sports where he captained both the basketball and tennis teams. In addition Mr. Wainwright worked on the school newspaper. He acknowledges those school activities as instrumental in developing his leadership skills and initiating the satisfaction which comes from achieving group goals.

After high school Mr. Wainwright took a post graduate year at Tilton Academy in New Hampshire. Following Tilton he attended Drew University in New Jersey. This college did not work out, so after two years, Mr. Wainwright left, joined the U.S. Army, and served in Europe. In addition to his Army duties while stationed in Italy, he taught English at an orphanage in Vicenza. Working with the priests at that orphanage made a tremendous impression on Mr. Wainwright and has impacted his personal philosophy and aspirations. Following his tour with the Army, he completed a degree in government and psychology at Boston University.

After graduating from B.U. in 1961, Mr. Wainwright spent several years as a teacher, coach, and administrator on the Boston area. He taught and was an administrator at Lesley College and he was founder and headmaster of Charles River Academy, a school for boys 13 to 18 with learning disabilities. In 1969 he moved to Cape Cod and became dean of students at Dennis-Yarmouth High School. During the next dozen years Mr. Wainwright was employed in several educational and human service positions. He was the creator and first director of the education program at the Barnstable House of Correction. He was also a staff psychologist for the Department of Youth Services facility in Brewster, heading their Homeward-Bound program for first time and youthful offenders. Additionally, he was involved in the creation and became director of the Harwich Junior High School career education program.

In 1976 Mr. Wainwright spent the summer backpacking

through Central America. While in Ecuador Mr. Wainwright met some talented artisans. A few years after that first visit Mr. Wainwright and his family opened a retail shop, Andean World, and began importing and selling the Ecuadorian handicrafts. The Ecuadorian connection is more than just economic, however, as the Wainwrights have welcomed two Ecuadorian boys to their home. These boys, now in their twenties, have lived with the Wainwrights while pursuing an education at Dennis-Yarmouth High School and subsequently at colleges.

Several years ago in 1985 Richard Wainwright nearly died from a severe case of hepatitis. This tragic incident made him reassess his life after almost twenty years as an educator. He decided that if he lived, he would accomplish two things. He would get his children's book, *A Tiny Miracle*, published and he would backpack through New Zealand. Mr. Wainwright has accomplished both his goals. *A Tiny Miracle* has sold more than 50,000 copies and is in it's sixth printing and thanks to a gift from his wife, Mr. Wainwright has backpacked through New Zealand.

Since 1986 when his first book was published, Mr. Wainwright has written and published, through his own publishing company, five additional books, *Poofin*, *Obadiah's Ghost*, *Mountains to Climb*, *A new Life for Sir Christopher*, and *Garden of Dreams*. He has another book scheduled for publication in 1996, *Grampa and Tecumseh*. Although these books are categorized as children's books, Mr. Wainwright writes for the whole family. His books draw from his own beliefs. He writes with a social message. His books concern problems and solving them and he addresses the concepts of love, sharing, courage, and integrity. His books teach the importance of kindness and of getting along with all kinds of people.

In addition to his writing and publishing, Mr. Wainwright conducts programs on the process of creating books. He has given these programs to many thousands of students in schools all along the east coast. After leaving his last formal education position in Harwich, Mr. Wainwright has found time to be an inventor. He has developed and patented children's safety products which he markets through his own company, Family Life Products. Beyond his personal and family activities, Mr. Wainwright has also found time to volunteer his services to the Dennis Recreation Commission, the YMCA and the Boy Scouts.