

Tektronix founder Murdock eulogized at memorial service attended by 200

More than 200 friends of Melvin J. (Jack) Murdock, cofounder of Tektronix, Inc., who was lost in the Columbia River May 16, attended a memorial at J.P. Finley & Son funeral home Saturday.

Murdock, whose seaplane overturned in stormy waters near Maryhill, Wash., has never been found. He was declared legally dead in Clark County Superior Court June 11. He was 53 and lived in Vancouver, Wash.

The Rev. Michael J. Heppen, assistant senior vice president of the University of Portland, conducted the simple service. A heart fashioned from white carnations and red roses was the only decoration.

"Jack had great admiration for the free enterprise system which enabled him to rise above his own humble origins," Father Heppen said in his 10-minute tribute.

Although Murdock, board chairman of Tektronix, Oregon's biggest employer, left a \$50-million estate, "he never engaged in any display of wealth," Father Heppen said.

"But he devoted every possible effort to insure that the freedoms which he had enjoyed would remain intact, tact.

"Jack desired the prosperity of his countrymen, partly because they were his countrymen, but chiefly to show the world that free men could be prosperous," he said.

"I believe that he would have wanted it said that he knew the pressure of work, the sting of bitterness and defeat and the personal anguish of every gray day of national peril," said Father Heppen, who served as a director of the Delauney Institute for the Mental Health for many years.

"Jack was indeed a very modest man," Father Heppen said. While few people knew him well, he surely at the same time could be called an outstanding citizen of this area.

"Countless men and women here and beyond are the better because of his many personal concerns and countless benefactions."

Father Heppen read an autobiography written by Murdock at the age of 16 as a class assignment at Franklin High School, "filing a flight plan for this life," which he followed to the letter.

"After leaving high school and establishing a business of my own I intend to go further into the study of radio phenomenon," he wrote. "I would like to learn all there is to know about radio, if possible.

"I shall probably carry on my experiments in this field and possibly some other branches of science. If I do all that I hope to do I shall probably make some inventions . . ."

Tektronix, founded by Murdock jointly with Howard Vollum in 1946, holds hundreds of patents and marketed more than 100 new products last year, providing jobs for 9,000 employees.

Power ignored

"Despite the accumulation of wealth and power, Jack remained the same — reserved, sincere and unpretending," Father Heppen said. "I suspect it never occurred to Jack at any point in his life that he was a powerful man."

Vollum, in Tek Talk, the Tektronix house organ, recalled that Murdock's father gave him a choice of going to college or starting his own radio shop.

Murdock chose to open a shop at SE 67th Avenue and Foster Road with Vollum as

his radio service man.

In 1946 they founded Tektronix and started the manufacture of oscilloscopes. Murdock was responsible for many of Tektronix's personnel policies, such as disregard of formalities. Everyone was called by his or her first name and no cash registers were in the lunch room, just an open box, Vollum write.

"Despite his achievements, he was a humble man, without pretense," Vollum wrote.

"He played down his own academic achievements — but in terms of broad education he had far more than many college graduates do.

"Although both eager and able to be outgoing, he intensely disliked personal publicity, particularly in the news media," Vollum concluded.