

William Charles Millar

June 16, 1930 - July 14, 2017

William Charles “Bill” Millar died at Talbot Hospice, July 14, 2017. He was 87.

Bill was born on June 16, 1930, in Port Washington, on Long Island, New York. The eldest of three sons of the late Herbert Charles Millar and Florence Allen Millar, Bill grew up with a strong work ethic and a deep love of the outdoors.

In his teens, Bill learned about hunting, fishing, and life on the water from adults such as his friend and mentor, Tom Kaelin. Bill became a self-described “dock rat,” picking up odd jobs along Port Washington’s waterfront, while also working in his father’s grocery store and attending high school as little as possible. At 16, after hanging around a group of locals who frequented the docks, Bill was made a member of their newly formed Manhasset Bay Sportsmen’s Club, a membership that he treasured and maintained throughout his life. He served as president of the club in 1962 and continued as a life and honorary member.

Bill’s club foot kept him out of the Army, but didn’t hold him back from anything else in his life. After high school, he headed west. He tried out and gave up on college in Utah before setting out for Wyoming, with little purpose in mind. When he got there, his car broke down, so he traded it for a Colt revolver and a job on a ranch where he learned how to be a cowboy. He saved up and

bought a saddle that he kept the rest of his life. When not working on the ranch, he guided hunters and worked for the Forest Service maintaining wilderness trails on horseback.

Seriously injured when a horse kicked him in the stomach, Bill went back to Port Washington to recover, but not before swearing that if he lived, he would return to Wyoming someday and become a “cattle baron.”

Bill remained in Port Washington after his recovery. He started a short-lived contracting company, worked briefly for the Folsom Arms Company, and indulged his love of the outdoors through hunting and guiding.

He married Barbara Sweeney in 1954, and they had three sons, Jeffrey, Duane and David.

Needing steadier employment, Bill went to work for The Equitable Life Insurance Company in New York City. He claimed that he didn't do well in sales, so they made him a district manager. Bill worked hard and learned the business, becoming an agency manager first in Puerto Rico and later in Detroit. In 1982, he was made president of the “Old Guard,” an organization of The Equitable's agency managers. At his retirement in 1989, his agency, William C. Millar & Associates, was recognized as the largest agency in The Equitable. Highly respected as a manager, when asked what his management system was, Bill would reply, “By wandering and wondering.”

While working for The Equitable in Michigan, Bill made use of his ranching experience by raising cattle on the farms where he and his family lived. And in 1987, he kept his promise and bought a spread in Wyoming, the Mil-R Ranch, raising cattle with his son, David.

Divorce and retirement left Bill looking for a place to settle down, and for advice he turned to an old friend with whom he had guided and hunted in Port

Washington in the early 1950s, Dr. Harry Walsh. Renowned for his book, *The Outlaw Gunner*, and one of the founders of Easton's Waterfowl Festival, Dr. Walsh encouraged Bill to come to the Eastern Shore. Bill immediately knew it was the place for him to retire and build a new life.

He found a home on the water in Oxford that kept him busy, first designing a new house and then maintaining the property, the outdoor life always calling to him. Bill will be deeply missed by the close friends he made with whom he played tennis, built boats and worked on community projects.

Giving back to the community was an important part of his life on the Eastern Shore. Bill volunteered with and served terms on the board of the Waterfowl Festival and was instrumental in the creation of memorials to Dr. Walsh as a founder of the event. Over the years, he also served on the boards of the Academy Art Museum, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, and the Benedictine School, and was involved with the Tred Avon Yacht Club and other local organizations. He encouraged people to "take time to dream, to think, to wonder, to help others, and give back what life has blessed you with."

Bill's marriage to Jane Mildren in 1991 ended in divorce five years later. He subsequently married Phyllis Stokes, who passed away in 2000.

In 2002, Bill married Maxine Whalen and spent the last 15 years enjoying their life and love together in Oxford, with months in summer at Southwest Harbor, ME, and winter on Sanibel Island, FL.

Bill's gruff exterior couldn't hide the twinkle in his eye, his dry sense of humor and caring heart. In a memoir he wrote in 2010, he said, "My genuine love of people, creating opportunities for people to survive, grow and thrive, created within me a mission in life."

In 1988, Bill wrote the following words upon the passing of his mentor, Tom Kaelin. He could have been writing them for himself:

“He was a man...a man who led a full and fabulous life; a life studded with heroic exploits. A life so many of us envied and just wished we could be the same. He was a man whose life was characterized all the way by a fierce loyalty to all about him and to good causes. Never stinting, never flagging, vigorous always. He was a man patriotic in extreme to his country, his town, his friends. Loving in extreme in his own way to those about him and honorable to the very core. He was a man whose life seemed to surmount every difficulty to meet every challenge and to bring inexhaustible courage to every trying situation; tough-minded, soft-hearted. He was a man. We all admired him genuinely; we were inspired by his daring spirit, by his limitless stamina, and by the depth and passion of his feelings of excitement and enthusiasm for all that took place in his life—the fishing, hunting, trapping and the many offshoots of those honorable endeavors or sports in which he literally poured himself into. He was a man whose life made a difference to many...one whose life will remain a vital force in the hearts and minds of all of us. “Yes, he was a man!”

Bill is survived by his wife, Maxine Whalen Millar; his three sons, Jeffrey Millar, Duane Millar of Michigan, David Millar of Wyoming and daughter-in-law Kristin Janka of Michigan; his three grandsons, James, William and Andrew Millar of Michigan; stepchildren, Christopher Whalen of Annapolis and Ashley Whalen of Wilmington, DE.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to Talbot Hospice, 586 Cynwood Dr., Easton, MD, 21601; or Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, 213 Talbot St., St. Michaels, MD, 21663.

A celebration of Bill's life will be held at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Oxford, MD, on Sunday, July 23, at 2:00 p.m.

Previous Events

Service

JUL **23**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Holy Trinity Church
Oxford, MD

Tribute Wall



“ *William Charles Millar*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *William Charles Millar*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *William Charles Millar*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM

BE

“ *Good-bye! a kind good-bye,
I bid you now, my friend,
And though 'tis sad to speak the word,
To destiny I bend*

*And though it be decreed by Fate
That we ne'er meet again,
Your image, graven on my heart,
Forever shall remain.*

*Aye, in my heart thoult have a place,
Among the friends held dear,-
Nor shall the hand of Time efface
The memories written there.
Goodbye,
S.L.C.*

Keokuk, Iowa, May 7, 1856

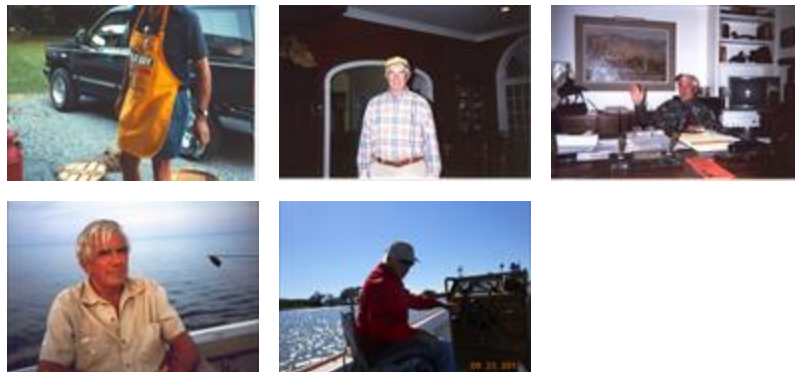
*- from album of Ann Virginia Ruffner, published in Hannibal Journal,
3/6/1935*

*I was hired by Bill and Maxine to organize his office...
It turned into so much more than I ever thought it would.
Bill I am happy to have called you my friend... I will never forget your
kindness, spunk and wisdom.*

Bernice - July 20, 2017 at 07:52 PM

PM

“ 10 files added to the album *New Album Name*



P D M - July 18, 2017 at 05:09 PM

PM

Dear Bill, thank you for the memories. They will never fade. You taught us so much.....birthing calves, fishing for salmon, transplating trees and, in your own way, how to be kind to people.

P D M - July 18, 2017 at 05:23 PM

 Gina Feltner

“ 1 file added to the album *Bill through the years...*



Gina Feltner - July 18, 2017 at 10:12 AM



Gina Feltner

My memory of Bill goes back to 1949 when Bill arrived in Pinedale Wyoming and his car broke down in front of the Stockman's Bar. My dad saw him, friended him, traded his car for a pistol he had in our car (my mother's as it turns out), and brought him home to our ranch. They turned Bill's '37 Chevy into a saw rig, for blocking up firewood, and we used it for many years. Bill worked for my dad, and others..bought a saddle and a horse. He very much became part of our family. On the first day of hunting season in 1950, on a cold September day, he was kicked by his horse as he was gearing up to take hunters out. He gave me credit for saving his life. I ran to the house and told my mother he was lying in the corral. My mother should get all the credit. We got him in the car, and he spent months in the hospital in Jackson Wyoming. Bill came back into my life many decades later when he decided he needed to get that 41 colt back into our family. He also treated me to a trip to Maryland for his 80th birthday celebration. There I met Maxine, who is truly a class act. That trip was a special time in my life. Bill..you will be missed.

Gina Feltner - July 18, 2017 at 10:24 AM

RM

“ 1 file added to the album *On the Tred Avon River*



Richard Marks - July 18, 2017 at 09:46 AM

TJ

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Tracey Johns - July 18, 2017 at 08:37 AM

MH

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Matthew Hall - July 17, 2017 at 05:00 PM

MH

Bill at the helm of Bucktail II, with his grandsons June 2017

Matthew Hall - July 17, 2017 at 05:02 PM

MW

“ 14 files added to the album Bill through the years...



MWM - July 17, 2017 at 01:46 PM

CH

“ Cecilia Hoevenaars lit a candle in memory of William Charles Millar



Cecilia Hoevenaars - July 17, 2017 at 07:49 AM

CH

He will be missed. I will miss his smile and quick wit. My prayers to the family.

Cecilia Hoevenaars - July 17, 2017 at 07:51 AM

KW

“ Kathleen Wanner lit a candle in memory of William Charles Millar



Kathleen Wanner - July 17, 2017 at 07:48 AM

DD

“ *Dianne Dulin lit a candle in memory of William Charles Millar*



Dianne Dulin - July 16, 2017 at 06:57 PM

MB

“ *Mike Butler lit a candle in memory of William Charles Millar*



Mike Butler - July 16, 2017 at 06:42 PM

DC

“ *Nothing but love for this wonderful man!!! So blessed to have had the privilege to be his bookkeeper for 17 years! I will miss him terribly!*

Hugs to Maxine and his family!

Mr. Millar... I hope you are riding around on your backhoe, playing in the dirt, up there!



Donna Clem - July 16, 2017 at 03:36 PM

KW

Maxine and family,

May your heart be filled with many fond memories of your beloved Bill. When you look to the stars at night, know that he will always be shining on you, a special Guardian Angel to watch over you and your family. He was indeed a kind and caring gentleman. My prayers and love to all.

Kathleen and family

Kathleen Wanner - July 17, 2017 at 07:44 AM