



Dr. William Freestate Wharton

January 4, 1944 - May 19, 2019

EASTON, MD – William “Bill” Freestate Wharton of Easton, MD died at Easton Memorial Hospital on Sunday, May 19, 2019. He was 75.

Born January 4, 1944 at Easton Memorial Hospital, he was the son of the late Dr. Franklin S. Wharton, DVM, and the late Frances Wharton deJonge of Centreville, MD.

Bill attended schools in Queen Anne’s County, and earned degrees (BA, MMus and DMA) in music from Trinity College, Hartford, CN, Northwestern University School of Music, Evanston, IL and the Catholic University of America School of Music, Washington, DC. He studied music with a broad array of mentor teachers including Mrs. Margaret Wolcott, Centreville pianist and organist/choir director of Bill’s hometown church; Professor Clarence Watters, world renown organist and pupil of Marcel Dupre; Richard Enright, organist and pupil of Bach expert Helmut Walcha and Dr. Conrad Bernier, organist, pupil of Joseph Bonnet, an internationally known teacher.

Dr. Wharton taught music for 35 years in the public schools of Talbot County and Chesapeake College, where he became the Professor of Music and was honored at his retirement as Professor Emeritus. In addition to his long career in music education, he served as Organist of St. Mark’s United Methodist Church in Easton, MD for over 50 years. In 2007 in honor of 40 years of service at St. Mark’s, the church honored him with the rebuilding and updating of the pipe organ’s console. In 2017 in honor of his 50 years of service he was honored with a commissioned piece “Variations on Engelberg”, composer

Charlie V Stanford, 1852-1924, Variations by Mark Miller. It reads "In Honor of Dr. William Wharton for fifty years of service to St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Easton, MD, September 17, 2017."

Wharton was a frequent attendant of regional and national conventions of the American Guild of Organists all over this country. He earned both the Associate and Choir Master Certifications of the AGO.

Bill was widely known in the Mid-Shore region for the many concerts that he performed and/or helped to organize, including the Abendmusiken Concerts. He served for some 10 years on the Talbot County Arts Council. Among his serious hobbies were computer and synthesizer music, photography, travel, and the stock market. Chesapeake College granted him a sabbatical in 1996 during which he traveled around the world to study and experience the music of other cultures, which included Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Sri Lanka India, Egypt and Italy. His first trip out of this country in 1970 took him to France (where he met the great virtuoso Marcel Dupre) and England (where he heard the King's College Chapel Choir) which allowed him to play and study several important organs and cathedrals.

Bill is survived by his brother, Franklin M. Wharton of Centreville MD and sister-in-law Kay G Wharton of Butler, PA. A brother, David B. Wharton preceded him in death.

A memorial service and organ recital will be held at St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Easton, MD. Date and time is to be determined. Memorial contributions may be offered to the Organ Memorial Fund of St. Mark's Church, 100 Peachblossom Road, Easton, MD 21601.

Cemetery Details

Private

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. William Freestate Wharton*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *Dr. William Freestate Wharton*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *Dr. William Freestate Wharton*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM



“ *So sorry to learn of Dr. Wharton's passing. He was my music teacher at Easton High and I was privileged to sing in many community concerts with him during my high school years. A very talented musician and elegant human being. Rest in heaven dear friend.*

Michael Evanson - November 25, 2022 at 12:57 PM



“ *Bill was a great musician and a great man. I have many precious memories of our times together when I lived in Cambridge. His doctoral organ recital at the Shrine in D.C. was riveting. When he played Carillon by Dupré to end the recital, it shook the foundations of the cathedral. Rest In Peace, old friend.*

Jeffrey Miller - July 06, 2019 at 11:46 PM

DR

“ *Dr. Bill Wharton was an amazing musician, music teacher, and organist. I had just seen him at an organ concert a few weeks ago. It was such a privilege to learn music from Dr. Wharton and to keep in touch with him at organ concerts over the years. He will be greatly missed.*

Deb Reilly

Deborah Reilly - May 28, 2019 at 10:43 AM

BS

“ *Barb Seese lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Barb Seese - May 23, 2019 at 10:27 PM

BS

Mr. Wharton, as he was known back then, was my high school chorus teacher but also an accompanist on either piano or harpsichord for many of my flute performances. Unbeknownst to me, he recorded several of these over those high school years and presented me with a reel-to-reel (yes, that old!) of my art, as he called it, upon graduation. An amazing gift, an amazing man. Will never be forgotten.

Barb Seese - May 23, 2019 at 10:39 PM



He kept all those recordings, a remarkable archive of music made in the '70s to the present. I hope that this library will be preserved in some way as a part of his legacy.

Deborah Dawkins - May 29, 2019 at 09:45 AM

TE

Deb, do you know where we can go online to access the recordings of some of his recitals? I'd love to listen to some of his playing. Is this something St. Mark's could do on its website?

Tom Edwards

Tom Edwards - May 29, 2019 at 06:39 PM

DM

“ *David Marino lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



David Marino - May 23, 2019 at 09:45 AM

CL

“ *Carolyn Lane lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Carolyn Lane - May 23, 2019 at 09:40 AM

CL

Godspeed, Dr. Wharton. I was blessed to have been your student. You taught me so much. I will always remember the two of us playing for "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" at Chesapeake College. What fun times! Thank you! I know you are now playing that organ in Heaven.

Carolyn Lane - May 23, 2019 at 09:44 AM

JP

“ *John & Phyllis Perkins lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



John & Phyllis Perkins - May 22, 2019 at 07:05 PM

DT

“ *Diana Temple lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Diana Temple - May 22, 2019 at 05:11 PM

PF

“ *To find something that you love doing - to find a place that welcomes your dedication - to perform there with skill for more than 50 years - to touch so many lives - are gifts few experience. Bill Wharton certainly did all that and more. It is sad to note his passing, but we were blessed by his time here.*



Phil Foster - May 22, 2019 at 04:29 PM

ST

“ I have very fond memories of Dr. Wharton from Glee Club and Chorus in high school. I still find myself humming show tunes I learned in his class. So sorry to hear of his passing.

Sherri Taylor - May 22, 2019 at 04:09 PM

GP

“ Gene And Lynda Palmatary sent a virtual gift in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton



Gene and Lynda Palmatary - May 22, 2019 at 08:40 AM

GP

What a talented man that has left this world. He loved his music and people. Know he is playing the organ in heaven. God Bless you Dr. William Wharton. You are surely an angel in heaven. Gene and Lynda Palmatary, Centreville.

Gene and Lynda Palmatary - May 22, 2019 at 08:43 AM



“ I will always recall with great pleasure his incredible abilities of playing the "king of instruments" and his many contributions to the musical culture of Talbot County, Maryland.

Peter Towle - May 22, 2019 at 08:09 AM

LC

“ *Lori Collier lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Lori Collier - May 21, 2019 at 10:32 PM

LP

“ *Lisa S Plummer lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Lisa S Plummer - May 21, 2019 at 08:52 PM

LJ

“ *Lynda James*



lynda James - May 21, 2019 at 08:12 PM

MC

“ *Mollie And Charlie Connolly lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Mollie and Charlie Connolly - May 21, 2019 at 07:10 PM

CL

“ *What a loss! I had him for a high school music teacher, Chesapeake College teacher, and when I sang in the choir at St. Marks. He brought all different types of music to the community. We will miss him very much*



Connie Lewis - May 21, 2019 at 06:02 PM

BK

“ *He taught me to appreciate all kinds of music including classical and Broadway. In addition to being a talented musician he was also a really nice, down to earth guy. What a loss.*

Brenda Jarman Kirby - May 21, 2019 at 01:13 PM

LC

“ *What a talented man. Will miss his music*



Lynn Crouch - May 21, 2019 at 10:17 AM

JM

“ *Joe And Linda Mullikin lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Joe and Linda Mullikin - May 21, 2019 at 10:11 AM

AB

“ *Agnes Blades lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Agnes Blades - May 21, 2019 at 09:58 AM

MG

“ *One of the most wonderful people on this earth!!*



Matt Guthrie - May 21, 2019 at 09:55 AM

HD

“ *Howard & Darlene lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Howard & Darlene - May 21, 2019 at 09:11 AM



“ *Tim & Laura Bishop lit a candle in memory of Dr. William Freestate Wharton*



Tim & Laura Bishop - May 20, 2019 at 11:31 PM



So sad to hear of this news. You were a very good teacher to us. You will be missed.

Tim & Laura Bishop - May 20, 2019 at 11:31 PM