



## William E. Davis

March 31, 1915 - April 29, 2008

William E. Davis died on Tuesday, April 29, 2008 in Chestertown, MD, aged 93, after a long and happy life.

Born in Stonington, CT to the late Louis and Katherine Davis on March 31, 1915. Bill lived most of his life in Wilmington, DE and Chestertown MD.

Dr. Davis studied at the New York State College of Forestry, received his doctorate in chemistry at Syracuse University and, after coming to Wilmington, obtained a Master of Science degree at the University of Delaware. His career included 25 years with Hercules, Inc. where he rose to the position of Senior Research Mathematician. In recognizing his new position, Dr. Robert Cairns, then Hercules' Director of Research, said, "This assignment recognizes Dr. Davis' outstanding leadership in the application of mathematics to company problems, his broad scientific ability, which covers both applied mathematics and industrial chemistry, and his versatile research skills." While at Hercules he achieved prominence as a cellulose chemist and later as a nuclear reactor engineer at the Oak Ridge (Tennessee) School of Reactor Technology. It was on Dr. Davis' recommendation that Hercules' first computer was acquired in 1956 and he was directly responsible for the establishment of the Applied Mathematics Division. He subsequently joined the staff at the University of Delaware where he worked as an Associate Professor of Computer Science and Manager of Programming Services. After retirement from the university,

he took a position at the University of Canterbury in Christ Church, New Zealand, where he and his wife Betty lived happily for 8 years.

Bill was a member of the American Chemical Society, American Mathematical Society, Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, and the Institute of Management Sciences. He was active for many years in the First Unitarian Church, where he held several volunteer positions, including Superintendent of the Church School. He had a wonderful sense of humor - his ability with a pun or a limerick and his wit – were legendary. In addition, he will be remembered for his love of and aptitude for music and languages as well as his generous nature and curiosity about the world around him.

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Elizabeth G. Davis, and two daughters, Kathie Davis Thomas, of Wilmington and Peggy Davis Porter, of Chadds Ford, PA. He was predeceased by his daughter Vinnie Davis Strand and his first wife, Grace Davis. Other survivors include: his son-in-law Jim Porter; grandchildren Susan Strand Smith, Rich Strand, Karin Thomas and Kris Thomas Vander Lugt; 5 great grandchildren; 4 step-children Gerry Meyer, Gordon Meyer, Margaret Boyd Meyer and Catherine Meyer Webb; 4 step-grandchildren and 3 step-great grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, Chestertown, MD on Saturday, June 14, 2008 at 1 pm, followed by a reception. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to your charity of choice.

Arrangements by Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home, 130 Speer Rd. Chestertown, MD 21620. Online condolences may be made at [www.fhnfuneralhome.com](http://www.fhnfuneralhome.com)

# Previous Events

## Service

JAN 1. 12:00 AM (ET)

Wesley Hall at Heron Point  
501 E. Campus Ave  
Chestertown, MD

# Tribute Wall



“ *William E. Davis*

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ *William E. Davis*

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ *William E. Davis*

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM