



William Scott McIlrath Jr.

May 25, 1932 - October 4, 2017

William S. "Bill" McIlrath, Jr., a former college admissions officer who later served as Director of College Counseling at the Cranbrook/Kingswood schools near Detroit, died at home October 4, 2017. The Bloomfield Township, Mich. resident was 85.

Born in Rochester, N.Y., Mr. McIlrath was the son of William Scott McIlrath, Sr., and Hazel Richmond McIlrath, who together owned and operated a small meat and food market. His father was a butcher, and his mother kept the books.

Mr. McIlrath attended Rochester public schools and graduated in 1950 from the James Monroe High School.

In 1954, after receiving a Bachelor's degree in sociology from Oberlin College, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served until 1956, training with the Army Security Agency, then the service's Signals Intelligence Agency, and was later posted to Fort Huachuca, in Arizona.

After his discharge from the Army, Mr. McIlrath returned to Oberlin College, where he earned a Master's degree in English.

"He worked for a while trying to write short stories and doing odd jobs around

Oberlin," his wife, Pauline R. McIlrath, recalled. "But he got tired of the Bohemian life and was hired in 1960 as an admissions rep for Oberlin."

He was serving as an admissions officer in 1962 when he interviewed an Oberlin applicant who, following her graduation, became his wife. He was later named Associate Director of Admissions.

After leaving Oberlin College in 1972, Mr. McIlrath became the banquet manager at Presti's, a family-owned Italian Restaurant in Oberlin.

In 1975, he returned to college administration, accepting a post as Director of Admissions at Knox College, in Galesburg, Ill. He left Galesburg six years later to become the Director of College Counseling at the private Cranbrook/Kingswood schools, in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., where he assisted graduating seniors with their college selections and applications.

"He gained the respect of his working peers at other schools, particularly for his written recommendations of Cranbrook/Kingswood students," Mrs. McIlrath said.

He retired from Cranbrook/Kingswood in 1998.

Friends and family remembered Mr. McIlrath as a modest, kind and friendly man, with a ready laugh. He often greeted passing strangers with a smile, a hearty greeting or a humorous quip, usually eliciting a warm reply. He loved animals and, on his daily walks got to know "every dog within a two-mile radius," his wife said.

A supporter of the arts, Mr. McIlrath enjoyed music and theater. He also loved gardening and reading, favoring current events and histories, particularly books on World War II.

He spent many hours working - and constructing - crossword puzzles. One of his proudest achievements was having several of his puzzles published by The New York Times. He contributed others to Simon and Schuster's crossword collections.

In addition to his wife, Mr. McIlrath is survived by many cousins, nieces, nephews, in-laws and friends.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, November 11, 2017 at 2:00 pm at the Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 W 11 Mile Road (4 blocks E of Woodward), Royal Oak, MI 48067.

In lieu of flowers, the family welcomes donations in Bill's memory to the following organizations:

International Waldenstrom's Macroglobulinemia Foundation

Make check payable to "IWWMF"

Mail to:

IWWMF

6144 Clark Center Avenue

Sarasota, FL 34238

Beaumont Hospice

Make check payable to "Beaumont Foundation"

Note on memo line "Beaumont Hospice"

Mail to:

Beaumont Foundation

PO Box 5802

Troy, MI 48007-9627

Cane and Able Stroke Club

Make check payable to "Beaumont Foundation"

Note on memo line "Cane and Able Stroke Club"

Mail to:

Beaumont Foundation

PO Box 5802

Troy, MI 48007-9627

Previous Events

Memorial Service

NOV 11. 2:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak

705 W. Eleven Mile Road

Royal Oak, MI 48067

(248) 541-7000

royal@sullivanfh.com

<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Tribute Wall

PS

“ *Bill was the mainstay and essential love for one of the dearest friends of my life. For that, a million thanks.*
Peter

Peter Stambler - October 19, 2017 at 10:07 AM



“ *Fall Fantasia was purchased for the family of William Scott McIlrath Jr..*



October 16, 2017 at 12:55 AM

SU

“ *I celebrate Bill's life and am saddened to lose a cherished man, whose love with and for my dear friend Polly was inspiring. Bill had many positive qualities, including a loving kindness he generously shared with all, including strangers and animals. He made the world a better place - may his spirit live on!*

Affectionately,

Suzanne Nagel

SuzanneNagel - October 15, 2017 at 10:32 AM

CG

“This above all, to thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.” If ever there lived a man who illustrated this enduring rule with virtue, it was Bill...true to himself, it followed as night the day, he was not false to anyone...Good night, sweet prince. Chuck Geroux

Charles Geroux - October 12, 2017 at 02:31 PM

MS

“ I havn't seen Bill in years, sorry to hear. He always shared a good story or moment. Our go to line was "Clay is the best thing in the world" Miss you my friend. Peace
Joe Smith

M Joe Smith - October 12, 2017 at 12:45 PM



“ Nobody could tell a story like Bill, standing, sitting, gesturing, imitating....fabulously perceptive and winning in his ways. And, he was a great care- and compassion-giver to his wife in her long relationship with type I diabetes. I can't imagine the two of them apart, but of course they aren't, not in their hearts.

Susan Ager

Susan Ager - October 10, 2017 at 10:56 PM

RB

“ I will always remember Bill as "The Best Boss a person could have!". I had the privilege of being his Administrative Assistant for 10 years at Cranbrook Community Schools in the College Counseling department. At the end of every single day, Bill would always say to me, "Thank you for all you do." (Not to mention all the "new" words he would teach me in daily dictation). We continued our friendship as Bill, Polly, my husband and I would meet for a social lunch outside of work, which cherished relationship continued even after he retired. Yes Bill, I will miss your smiling, gentle soul along with all the others whose lives you have touched.
Sincerely,
Rosemary (and Gerry) Brooks

Rosemary Brooks - October 09, 2017 at 05:17 PM

AV

“ We have lost a wonderful friend. We cherish the memories he has left with us . We are so happy that we had the opportunity to visit with him last month. He was very sick but still had his wonderful sense of humor and he was thrilled to have our surprise visit!



Polly was by his side to the end and kept him wrapped in love as she tended to his every need. Our thoughts are with her during this sad time.

With much love and sadness,
Ann and Pete

Ann VanHorn - October 07, 2017 at 09:03 PM

MP

“ *Mike Peterson purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of William Scott McIlrath Jr..*



Mike Peterson - October 06, 2017 at 09:12 PM