



## William Merrill Crossman

August 8, 1923 - December 14, 2016

TRAVERSE CITY - William "Bill" Crossman of Traverse City sailed away peacefully at the Grand Traverse Pavilions Dec. 14, 2016. Born August 8, 1923 in Belding MI., he was the son of Lee W. Crossman and Letha Woten Crossman.

Besides his roles of husband and father, Bill had three notable passions in his life- architecture, sailing, and playing the cello. His life has been guided through active memberships in the American Institute of Architecture, the United States Power Squadron, the Grand Traverse Yacht Club and the Lansing Symphony Orchestra. He was also a member of the Traverse Bay United Methodist Church.

After high school, Bill was drafted into the Army Air Corps, where he served as Ground Crew Chief maintaining flight training bombers at Muroc Army Base in the Mojave desert. After the service, he married his first wife Laurice on Sept. 13, 1945 and embarked on the first phase of his life of raising a family, earning his architecture license and working various jobs leading up to a successful architectural career. During this time, Bill pursued his high school love of the cello and eventually secured a chair in the Lansing Symphony Orchestra in the late 1950's.

When Laurice passed away in 1977, Bill was firmly involved in a local architectural career and many boating organizations. He served as an educational officer and District 9 Commander of the US Power Squadron and was actively involved in many local boating committees and activities. His life's dream was to circumnavigate all five of the Great Lakes in his 29 foot sailboat that he built from a kit and conquered Lakes Michigan and Huron before having to give up his dream.

In 1979, Bill proposed to his second wife Marian Marnett on the dance floor, because in his words, "...she couldn't get away". They were married on April 2nd of that year and embarked on the second phase of his life, which saw continued boating experiences. Bill helped his longtime friend Les Biederman sail his boat Happy Days from Fort Lauderdale to Traverse City, and in 1990, Bill and Marian rented a canal boat and toured the Oxford

Canal in England. Together they enjoyed much traveling and eventual retirement.

When Marian passed away at the Pavilions in 2010, Bill volunteered there to “give back” to the facility and staff that had cared for her so well. It was this Pavilions family that grew to know and love this “man of many hats” who endlessly roamed the halls with his walker. It was this family that surrounded him when he passed – and who will miss him dearly as well.

Bill is survived by three sons, Jim (Nancy) Crossman of Great Falls MT, with their son Lucas (Sahra) and daughters Angie and Jamie, David Crossman of Central Lake MI, with his sons Travis and David II, and William (Linda) Crossman of Fife Lake MI, with their son Matthew and daughter Melissa (Jim) Fletcher. There was also one nephew, 12 great grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandson. Also surviving are 3 step children, Lee (Georgia) Marnett of Madison IN, with their daughters Christine (Rob) Hoogenboom and Lindsay (Michael) Clark, John (Jan) Marnett of Williamsburg MI, with their son Brandon (Jessica) and daughter Andrea (Scott) Buyze, and Kendra (Maurice) Auxier of Hanover IN, with her son Matt Leininger. There were also 11 step-great-grandchildren.

Bill was preceded in death by both parents, both wives and two sisters, Marjorie and Lois.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2017 with a visitation held one hour prior at 10 a.m. at the Traverse Bay United Methodist Church, 1200 Ramsdell Rd. Traverse City. A luncheon in the Fellowship Hall will follow the service.

In lieu of flowers please consider a memorial contribution to the Grand Traverse Bay Sail and Power Squadron c/o Jerry Williams 3626 Country Club Dr. Traverse City, MI 49684.

Please share your thoughts and memories with Bill’s family by way of his online guestbook at <http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com>.

The family is being cared for by the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

# Events

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**JAN**   **Visitation**                      10:00AM - 11:00AM

**21**

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Traverse Bay United Methodist Church  
1200 Ramsdell Street, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

**JAN**   **Memorial Service**    11:00AM

**21**

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Traverse Bay United Methodist Church  
1200 Ramsdell Street, Traverse City, MI, US, 49684

# Comments

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“ My wife and I were boating on Lake Michigan and were placed in a slip behind Bill and Marian. They talked with us even though we were power boaters. Bill helped us tie up our boat and within an hour we were invited to join them for conversation. We talked boating...maybe because Bill saw us try to dock the boat. Bill encouraged us to join the Grand Traverse Sail and Power Squadron. He was pretty convincing and we did.

I remember Bill coming to Power Squadron dinners dressed in his uniform. He was a proud member. Bill was a sweet man with a huge heart for people. I will miss him!

Dave Millross

**Dave Millross** - January 17, 2017 at 10:46 AM