



William M. Connell

April 17, 1927 - January 30, 2024

William Mitchell Connell, “Popi”, died of natural causes on January 30, 2024, at home, surrounded by his loving family at the age of 96 years, 9 months.

Bill was born on April 17, 1927 in Philadelphia, PA, the first child of Catherine and Joseph Connell. He enjoyed a blessed childhood as the oldest of eleven children including Donald, Joseph, Ruth, John, Margaret, Mary Louise, Catherine, Thomas, Patricia and Robert. He attended St. Stephen’s Parochial School followed by Roman Catholic High School in Philadelphia. Following his graduation, he was appointed as a Cadet Midshipman at the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point. During this time he served on T2 tanker ships in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters in World War II. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

He met the love of his life, Margaret Marie McGrath, “Peg”, on a blind date as a senior at Kings Point in 1948. They were married in Brooklyn, NY on December 11, 1949. She was known as ‘The Princess’ by the entire Connell family; she exuded elegance, sophistication, intelligence and grace. They were blessed with three children, William Mitchell, Jr., Mary Beth and Marc Donald. They raised their family in New Providence, NJ from 1960-1984, where life centered around 86 Brookside Drive and Our Lady of Peace Catholic Parish and School. It was the quintessential American family life shared with extended family and friends.

Following his military service, Bill began his career as a loss prevention manager at Hardware Mutual Insurance Company before moving to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey where he spent the majority of his career as Administrator of Safety and Environmental Programs. Following retirement from the Port Authority in 1984, Bill and Peg moved to Stuart, Florida where he began a second career at Burger King as Director of Safety and Risk Management. He finished his professional life serving as a consultant to industry as President of William M. Connell CSP, PA. In Florida, family life transitioned to grandchildren and great-grandchildren, travel and golf at their beautiful community, Willoughby.

Bill was known for his deep faith, generosity and constant attention to others. While in New Providence, he served as lector and usher at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church and as a member of the Knights of Columbus. After moving to Stuart, he became an integral member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. His most fulfilling volunteer contribution was to the Diocese of Palm Beach Prison Ministry. His impact was widely recognized by incarcerated men, prison staff and fellow ministers. "He saw beyond bars and chains, leaving an indelible mark of love, understanding and redemption on the inmates' hearts he touched."

Bill was pre-deceased by his wife Peg who died in 2003 after 53 years of marriage, his siblings Donald, Joseph, Ruth, John and Robert and great-grandchildren Margaret "Maggie" Hartley and Sarah Collins Limbaugh. He is survived by siblings Margaret, Mary Louise, Catherine, Thomas and Patricia. He is also survived by his three children, Bill Connell (Tammy), Mary Beth Donaldson (George) and Marc Connell (Mary Beth), 12 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

For 96 years he showed us how to live; for the last nine months, he showed

us how to die with bravery, dignity and grace. We miss him with all our hearts but he lives on in each of us as we go forward embracing each other and God's gift of life.

The wake will be held on Friday, February 16 from 4pm-6pm at Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, in Jupiter. The Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Saturday, February 17 at 11am at St. Peter Catholic Church. Private interment will occur at a future date.

If you would like to view the Mass via livestream, please click the following link approximately 5-10 minutes prior to the start of the Mass. <https://www.stpeterjupiter.com/live-streaming>

In lieu of flowers, the family requests considering a donation to the Cardiovascular Program at Boston Children's Hospital at bostonchildrens.org/give now or checks can be made payable to Boston Children's Hospital Trust (Margaret Hartley in Memo line) and mailed to:
Boston Children's Hospital Trust
401 Park Drive, Suite 602
Boston, MA 02215-5301

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 16. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home
250 Center Street
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 744-2030
<https://www.taylorandmodeenflorida.com>

Prayer Service

FEB 16. 5:30 PM (ET)

Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home
250 Center Street
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 744-2030
<https://www.taylorandmodeenflorida.com>

Funeral Mass

FEB 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Peter Catholic Church
1701 Indian Creek Parkway
Jupiter, FL 33458

Military Honors

FEB 17. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Peter Catholic Church
1701 Indian Creek Parkway
Jupiter, FL 33458

Tribute Wall

TC

“ I first met Bill and Peg in 1998 when I relocated to Stuart. We became instant friends and shared many lunches and dinners. I found them to be very humble, gracious and a joy to be around. They were extremely proud of their family. After Peg's passing Bill and I continued our frequent lunches until I relocated to Vero Beach. Even though we did not continue our lunches we remained in close contact. I am certain that Bill and Peg are now together again.

Tom Crummey

Thomas Crummey - February 06, 2024 at 08:50 AM

KR

“ Poppi's infectious warmth and genuine kindness radiated from him, making everyone he met feel instantly like family. I'll forever cherish our conversations at Waverly Farm and the adventures we shared in Nantucket. He is deeply missed, but his memory will continue to light up our lives.

Kathryn Riman - February 01, 2024 at 10:04 AM

FC

“ Thinking of you both, Mary Beth and George, and your wonderful family as you celebrate a remarkable man. I'm sorry that I was never able to meet him in person, but what a life he lived. Courage, strength, and grace to you all.

*--Fletcher Carr
The Benjamin School*

Fletcher Carr - February 01, 2024 at 08:37 AM