



William Lee "Bill" McIlroy

May 31, 1924 - April 3, 2020

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Sunnyvale, California

William Lee "Bill" McIlroy went to be with our Lord and Savior on Friday, April 3, 2020 after a long and full life. Bill was born at home on the family farm at Cass, Arkansas to William Christopher and Ida Faye Weaver McIlroy.

Bill was predeceased by his loving wife of sixty-five Mary Helen Moore McIlroy. Bill and Mary, of Cushing Oklahoma, married on July 1, 1948. He was also predeceased by his parents, his sister Theresa Faye McIlroy Towner of Fairfield, Ca. and his brother Grady McIlroy of Alameda, Ca.

Bill is survived by his son William Christopher McIlroy of Santa Rosa, Ca., Grandchildren Simon A. McIlroy and wife Michelle of Burbank, Ca. with Great Grandchildren Sophie, Beatrix, Annabelle, and Abigail, Granddaughter Crystal Lyn McIlroy of Elk Grove, Ca. with Great Grandson Liam, Grandson Nicholas Kyle Wilson of Sparks Nevada with Great Grandson Brayden; his daughter Lucy Margaret Warren of Santa Clara, Ca. and Grandson Joseph Daniel Warren of Santa Clara, Ca.; and son Matthew Lee and wife Barbara Lee Nordt McIlroy of Sunnyvale, Ca., Grandchildren Charles Patrick McIlroy of Prairie Grove Ark. with Great Grandchildren Barrett Grady and Blakely Rose and their Mother, Kristin Michelle Lindsey McIlroy of Fayetteville, Ark., and Grandson, Daniel Edward and wife Tracie Schmidt of Medina, Ohio with Great Grandchildren Layla and Nathan; and special Nephew David A. McIlroy of

Pleasant Hill, Ca. Bill is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, and California.

Bill was baptized as a Southern Baptist at the first Southern Baptist Church in Ozark, Arkansas. He was a deacon there, superintendent of Sunday schools, and taught the young adults and college and career classes.

Bill attended eighteen one and two room rural country schools in Franklin County, Ark., graduated from Ozark High School in Ozark, Ark., and entered Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, Ark. at fifteen years old. An athlete, he played football and baseball for Ozark H.S. and Arkansas Tech. He was also a AAU and Golden Gloves boxer for the Ark. Tech Wonder Boy's. He boxed for the Second Marine Corps Div. during WW II and played Semi-Pro football after the war for the Crockett Rockets in Crockett, Ca. from 1948 to 1951.

Bill was a Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts leader. He coached for the Sunnyvale Serra Little League and Senior League. He also coached for the Cupertino Babe Ruth and Senior Babe Ruth Leagues. For many years he was a Little League umpire.

Bill was a farmer/rancher in Arkansas, a bridge maintenance and structural steel Foreman for Caltrans, and a bridge inspector for the Arkansas Highway Department. He spent 42 years as a bridge man. He also taught first aid, bridge work, management and administration, and mathematics in adult education. While working on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, he was the first to integrate it. He was a member of the Arkansas Cattleman's Assoc. and the Arkansas Farm Bureau.

During WW II, Bill served in the US Navy, with the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Marine Divisions, and with the USNI. He was a hospital corpsman with school at Balboa Park, San Diego, Ca., received Marine Raider training at Camp Elliot, and further training at Camp Pendleton. He served at Guadalcanal, Eniwetok, Saipan, Tinian, and Okinawa. As he said, "I had many D Days." He and Grady were both slated for the invasion of Japan but were saved by the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He landed at Nagasaki and

served later at Miyazaki. He then saw USNI service through April, 1946. He was a disabled US veteran and a life member of the DAV.

Those who remember Bill will remember his love of dogs and in particular, his Belgian Shepherd, Big, His Doberman Pinscher, Nitro, and his Border Collie, Maggie. All three dogs made numerous trips with him between California and Arkansas. They all worked with him on the farm herding cattle, horses, and pigs. Maggie was trained to obey commands in Japanese.

Bill was a lifelong marksman and hunter. He grew up hunting for food to feed the family during the depression with his .22 rifle. He later hunted fished in Ca. and Ark. Teaching his extended family to do so. He enjoyed deep sea fishing as well.

Most of all, Bill loved being with people. He made friends everywhere and enjoyed telling his tales. He touched many lives.

Open viewing at Shaffer Funeral Home Ozark, Arkansas from 1:00 PM until 9:00 PM Wednesday, April 15, 2020.

Graveside Service will be held 2:00 PM Thursday, April 16, 2020 at Highland Cemetery in Ozark, Arkansas with Brother Ted Darling officiating under direction of shaffer Funeral Home.

To leave online condolences visit: www.shafferfuneralhomeozark.com

Honorary Pallbearers for W. L. "Bill" McIlroy

According to Dad, "There were many chapters in my life. These were special, each and all had a significant part and place with me, my sons, and my family.

Tomodachis all. W. L. McIlroy

Robert Blaha

Wanda Breckenridge

Lavelle D. Brown

Elliot S. Burdick

Orville "Pappy" Campbell

John "Swede" Carlson

Al Cimino

Carter J. Corey Sr.

_____ Cross

Al Davis

Aldo Da Re (Aldo Ray)

Loren Davis

Harrison Dickerson

Dawn Dunn

E. R. Foley

Lee Forest

E. E. Fye

Joe Garavella

Jackie Gibbons

Clair Gibson

Bill Hall

Carl Hamilton

Alvin D. Herden

John Jackson

Andy Janovich

Jim Kelley

R. D. Kinsey

Goodwin Knight

Coy Lee

Harold "Hal" Lorimer

Tolly Lucas

D.E. Marsh

Coy Mayfield

Debbie McClellan

Joe McClellan

Paul McQueen

Chuck Moore

T. W. Moose

Julius Morris

Aria Price

Buford Pruitt

C. H. Purcell

Jim Rowland

Norman Snyder

Bill Sossamon

Willie Thibodeaux

Gilbert Tolberg

Al Thomas

Johnny Verduce

Earl Wolthuis

Howard Wood

Al Zampa

Further obituary information about my Dad, W.L. McIlroy by M. L. "Matt" McIlroy.

Dad was born at home at Cass, Arkansas in Franklin County without a doctor in attendance. He had multiple traumatic injuries before, during, and after WW II.

As a hospital corpsman, he became expert at treating his own wounds. His records were incomplete as a result. He tried to have his records amended long after the war to no avail. At best, his discharge was piecemeal, not even listing the stations he served on. He greatly regretted the loss of his sea bag containing a Japanese battle signed by all of the surviving members of his batallion on Saipan.

He suffered a stabbing wound on Saipan during the Japanese banzai attack at Tanapag, he was rescued by his good friend W. Coy Mayfield of Batson, Ark. Mayfield, previously wounded, bandaged and tagged for evacuation by Dad, saw other marines from their unit pass by his stretcher on the beach. He

called out, "Where's Mac?" Told he was back in his fox hole and wounded, Mayfield rolled off the stretcher, picked up a .30 carbine and a bandolier. He crawled back to the position and up to the fox hole. He called in, "Are you still alive?" When Dad responded in the affirmative, he pulled and pushed the dead Japanese officer off Dad. Together they got Dad out and Mayfield crawled to the beach with Dad on his back. When back on the beach, Dad stitched himself up. Mayfield dropped the .30 carbine and bandolier, rolled back onto the stretcher, and asked for a cigarette. Mayfield was evacuated. Dad went on to the island to island invasion of Tinian. I still have the samurai sword that Dad brought back from the dead Japanese officer. Dad later gave the eulogy for Coy Mayfield when he passed away in Harrison, Ark. Mayfield still carried mortar shrapnel in his head from Saipan when he passed..

Dad once observed, "Where I grew up, there were no doctors or stores less than a full day's ride by horse or wagon and team. No cars or car roads, no phones, radios, televisions, electricity, or ice boxes (refrigerators). I plowed oxen and went to eighteen different country one-room schools in six years. I graduated high school and was in college at sixteen (August, 1940). I was suturing livestock, family, and neighbors by age twelve. I sutured a lot of marines during WW II. I sutured myself three times. I gave myself all of my own shots during WW II. I gave about 80,000 shots to marines during the war. (As a child, I can remember Dad carrying marine corps medical and surgical bags in his car trunk. I can show many places where he sutured me).

Dad always said that he would always be these things, a bridge man (W. L. McIlroy: A Bridgeman a film by Richard Schatzman has been shown on the Discovery Channel and can be viewed at the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Museum), a U.S. Marine, a farmer, and a Baptist. He loved the Eastern Span of the bridge from the Oakland approaches to the Western end of the Yerba Buena Island tunnel. He knew every inch of it. From the bay water to the top of the towers. He considered it his bridge. He loved to sit up on the top tower near the end of the day as the sun was setting over the Pacific in the

West. Dad was always ecstatic to see a fellow former WW II marine such as Pee-Wee Jones in Ozark, Arkansas. Dad regaled with tales of Pee-Wee's bravery under fire. Dad, along with cousin W. Dee Gober taught me cattle work and farming.

Dad was both an Arkansawyer and a Prune Picker. He was a civil rights advocate and raised our family that way.

Cemetery Details

Highland Cemetery

Highway 64 West
Ozark, AR 72949

Previous Events

Open Visitation

APR **15**. 1:00 PM - 9:00 PM (CT)

Shaffer Funeral Home
2315 West Commercial Street
PO Box 680
Ozark, AR 72949
(479) 667-4147
shafferfuneralhome@gmail.com

Graveside Service

APR **16**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Highland Cemetery
Highway 64 West
Ozark, AR 72949

Tribute Wall



“ *Shaffer Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of William Lee "Bill" McIlroy*



Shaffer Funeral Home - April 14, 2020 at 04:31 PM



“ *William Lee "Bill" McIlroy*

January 30, 2023 at 02:28 AM



“ *Dear Matt and Family,
We are truly sorry to hear of Bill's passing. Regretfully we were not aware of the service and disappointed we could not be there to hear more of Bill's legacy directly from the family. Bill will always be a strong fixture in the Cass area to the young and old. He blazed a very large trail and our lives here have not been the same since he moved.*

Anyone he crossed paths with left with a story to share so he will always exist in these hills and along the Mulberry.

May his memories always bring your family comfort.

John and Kathy Jones

John Jones - April 18, 2020 at 08:47 PM

JB

“ *My deepest condolences to all. My thoughts and prayers go with you and your family and may God comfort you all at this time.*

Jennifer Bullock-Gouge - April 16, 2020 at 05:53 PM



“ *Cathy Jordan lit a candle in memory of William Lee "Bill" McIlroy*



Cathy Jordan - April 16, 2020 at 11:21 AM



“ *Sherry McClellan sent a virtual gift in memory of William Lee "Bill" McIlroy*



Sherry McClellan - April 14, 2020 at 11:04 PM



“ *My deepest condolences to all. I'll say one thing, there will never be another man like Bill. My family adored him. He was the best storyteller I've ever met. He was so good to my son's, Tutor and Jeffrey Primm. We have so many great memories, and he really touch our lives in a great way. I'm also thankful God allowed this man to be a large part of my families lives. He was one of the most intelligent and interesting men I've ever met. He had vast knowledge of families, history, and our country. May he Rest In Peace with his beautiful wife, Mary and family. Forever friend, Love Sherry McClellan 🙏🙏🙏💙*

Sherry McClellan - April 14, 2020 at 11:02 PM