



William F. McNeil

May 4, 1947 - March 6, 2024

William Ferguson McNeil, 76, passed away peacefully at his home in Alton, Illinois. He was born May 4, 1947 in Dunfermline Fife, Scotland to the late Annie Russell (McKnight) McNeil and William Ferguson McNeil, a bagpiper with the Black Watch Royal Highland Regiment. McNeil and his family immigrated to the United States when he was just a child. They arrived here on St. Patrick's Day, then settled in Wood River.

McNeil graduated from East Alton-Wood River High School, earning an athletic scholarship to Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois, then later transferring to SIUE, where he graduated. He played soccer there and majored in political science.

Lovingly known as Bill or Uncle Bill to many, then more recently earning the title Grandpa Bill, he was a self-proclaimed gypsy at heart and although he could be a cantankerous old man at times, he had a heart of gold underneath it all. In his younger years, he loved to host friends and family and would feed anyone he could. Food and music were both a love language for him. He loved music, nature, and books, and he gave his daughter and the rest of his family a love for all of that and more. He and his late sister May were very artistic and their artwork will be cherished by their family for years to come. McNeil tended to follow his own path, remaining self-employed most of his life. He owned and operated McNeil's Pub (at Forkeyville) and later Heartland Antiques on Broadway in Alton. He had a deep appreciation for art and antiques, with a knack for seeing the beauty in things some of us wrote off as

junk.

Surviving are his daughter Stephanie Cheatham, her husband Michael, and their children Oliver, Landon, and Paisley, as well as his niece, Cheryl Link, niece Julie Clymer, nephew Kim Clymer, and his wife Gayle, his great-nieces Tara Link, her husband Jack Callahan, Morgan (Clymer) Hudson, her husband Dustin, and their three children, Briana Liljenberg, her fiancé Joe, and their three children, and his great-nephew Ryan Clymer and his wife Claire, as well as many other family members and loved ones.

He was preceded in death by his mother, father, brother, Alexander McNeil, and sister, May Clymer, along with many friends, notably his buddy Linker, who he would regularly toast a Stag to at his favorite local watering holes. His daughter would like to thank all of the individuals who helped him and spent time with him, especially these last few years.

There will be a visitation from 1:00 p.m. until time of memorial service at 3:00 p.m. Saturday, March 16, 2024 at Gent Funeral Home in Alton.

Memorials may be made to 5A's Animal Shelter in Alton. Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR **16**. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home Inc
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002
(618) 466-5544
<https://www.gentfuneralhome.com/>

Memorial Service

MAR **16**. 3:00 PM (CT)

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Alton, IL 62002
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Tribute Wall



“ *Bill was a sweet guy so sorry for your loss he'll be missed* ”

Vicky Venardos - March 16, 2024 at 10:38 PM



“ *Vicky Venardos lit a candle in memory of William F. McNeil* ”



Vicky Venardos - March 16, 2024 at 10:37 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William F. McNeil.* ”



March 15, 2024 at 09:23 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of William F. McNeil.* ”



March 13, 2024 at 10:53 AM

JW

“ Bill, Donnie Edwards and I were buddies at EA Jr High. We spent a lot of time together those two years. I will always have fond memories of him. RIP Bill. I'll toast a Stag Beer in your memory.

jackye (Ranz) Wilson - March 10, 2024 at 09:00 PM

DL

“ Bill was an awesome man. He and my brother, Ron Link, “the Linker”, were best buddies since their high school days.

I thoroughly enjoyed every minute I got to spend with Bill over the years. My family was very blessed to have had Bill in our lives.

Sincere condolences to Bill's family and friends. RIP Bill!

Denny Link

Denny Link - March 09, 2024 at 11:59 PM