



William O. Williams

February 19, 1942 - May 1, 2022

William Owen Williams led an event-filled life of 80 years, which ended on May 1st, 2022. Born in Salt Lake City, Utah on February 19th, 1942, the youngest of 4 children of Everett and Thelma Owens. Bill was preceded in death by siblings Pat, Mike and Bob. Life gifted Bill with 6 sons, Bill, Chris, Joe, Eric, Erin and Ira who knew their father as a hardworking man, driven by an interest in history and friend to many.

Bill developed many talents throughout his life; he was a man who could build a house from the ground up, restore any vintage article he came across, or create a historical tableau accurate to the smallest detail. He began working at a young age, helping in his fathers' heating and air conditioning business, and along the way picking up carpentry, masonry and electrical skills. Also, as a young person Bill acquired an interest in American history that would guide him his entire life. In 1973 Bill moved to Maryland, then Gettysburg in 1977 where, along with his contracting business, he began a lifelong path in living history. In 1976 he co-founded the Irish Brigade, Company I, 116th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, in which he served for many years at the head of the column as its' esteemed color bearer. Over decades Bill created living history impressions from many time periods including a Pirate, a French and Indian War civilian, a Revolutionary War soldier, a Civil War soldier, a Cowboy, and a Civil War Grand Army veteran. Items and costumes from each impression were researched and worn with an understanding of minutia, unparalleled in depth. Even with such a full plate of experiences Bill still

thirsted for new paths to interpret, his final years involved a deep dive study into civilian life and culture of the western frontier and fleshing out the persona of a Grand Army of the Republic veteran.

A loyal friend, Bill often gave time and resources to help friends who needed help with varied projects. He was always ready to share his opinions of the way of the world with the perspective of an old soul, his insights often provoking more conversation.

Bill had the opportunity to be part of several significant historical films, Glory, Gettysburg, Last of the Mohicans, Bob Roberts, Gods and Generals and the Patriot to name a few. He also modeled in costume for several well-known historical artists.

His craft legacy includes moving and restoring several 18th century Pennsylvania log cabins, creating and hosting one of the first living history properties in Gettysburg, co-creating 9' bronze doors at Nemaquin Resort, restoration of several properties in Squirrel Hill and Shadyside and the development of a historical interpretive program featuring the Staymate Log Cabin for the Murrysville Historical Society. He will also be remembered for his pirate ship, the Ark which docked at the Oakmont Marina and sailed the Allegheny River for several years.

His strong hands and comforting laugh will be missed. Bill is survived by his wife of 44 years Cheryl (Baxter), sons Bill, Chris and Joe (from a previous marriage) and sons Eric and Erin. The couples' sixth son, Ira, passed away in 2012. Bill leaves behind 3 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren who will carry the Williams legacy forward.

Tribute Wall



“ *William O. Williams*

October 09, 2023 at 09:55 AM



“ *William O. Williams*

October 06, 2023 at 11:36 AM



“ *2 files added to the album Memories Album*



Eric Williams - June 03, 2022 at 10:57 AM



That old mule Skinner uncle Bill

Jeff Williams - June 07, 2022 at 02:35 PM



One hell of a character will miss him dearly

Jeff Williams - June 07, 2022 at 02:36 PM



Hey Eric. This is Chris Szejc. I was thinking about your dad and your family recently and discovered your father had recently passed away. I'm sorry for your loss and am proud to have known him. I'm sorry I didn't keep in contact over the years. He was a kind and intelligent man. I hope you and the family are doing well. Sending my love. 707 357 4425 if you ever want to talk or catch up.

Christopher Szejc - August 22, 2022 at 08:18 PM

NB

Bill, I am so sorry to hear of the passing of your father. I hope you're doing well.

N. Bazan - February 03 at 09:39 PM