



Mr. William E. "Bill" Sarmiento

January 1, 1934 - January 10, 2023

WILLIAM E. SARMENTO

Lowell Sun Theater Reviewer for over 43 years

William (Bill) E. Sarmiento, well known theater reviewer, passed away very peacefully January 10, 2023, after a life well lived. He had been a resident of Watson Fields, assisted living facility, in Dover, NH for the past six months where he received outstanding care.

Bill was born in Lowell on January 1, 1934, and just enjoyed celebrating his 89th birthday on New Year's Day. After graduation from Lowell High School he attended Boston University where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in American History and Civilization in 1956. He was enrolled in their ROTC program and served in the U.S Army for two years after graduation. Bill went on to earn a Master's in Education degree from B.U. in 1960.

Bill had an extensive work career in academia in addition to writing a newspaper column. He taught history at Tewksbury High School, worked in admissions at Boston University, was a guidance counselor at Tuckahoe High School in East Chester, NY, and taught both philosophy and world religions at Mercy College and later at Pace University in New York.

Living in New York City afforded Bill the opportunity to attend the opening night of every Broadway play and some off-Broadway plays. As an avid music, movie, and theater buff, he had a theater column in the Lowell Sun from 1961 to 2004 covering several thousand shows, ballets operas and concerts. At one

time he wrote seven columns a week for the Sun, Monday through Friday and two on Sunday including the Weekly TV book, complete with a picture sketch of him sporting a bowtie. He wrote his final farewell column entitled “Thanks for the Memories” on October 2, 2004.

Bill also loved music and while summering in Ogunquit, Maine and later as a full time resident he could be heard belting out show tunes solo at The Front Porch piano bar. He got to sing several times for the residents at Watson Fields where he was nicknamed “Broadway Bill.”

Over the years, particularly on school breaks, during the summer, and then in retirement, Bill travelled abroad extensively and accumulated a vast network of friends in New York, Ogunquit and “across the pond.”

Bill was predeceased by his parents Emmanuel Sarmiento and Mary (Sheedy) Sarmiento and his devoted life partner of over fifty years, Charles T. Wilson, who passed away in 2022. He is survived by his brother David Sarmiento of Westford, MA, a sister-in-law Diane Sarmiento of Lowell, MA, life long friends Dorothy (Dolly) Hayden and Joanne Holt, both of Lowell, MA and many other friends and relatives.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS MAY CALL AT THE FAY MCCABE FUNERAL HOME, 105 MOORE STREET, LOWELL, MA ON MONDAY, JAN. 16, 2023 FROM 2 UNTIL 5 PM. BILL’S FUNERAL WILL BEGIN ON TUESDAY MORNING AT 10 AM, FOLLOWED BY HIS FUNERAL SERVICE AT 11 AM IN THE FUNERAL HOME. BURIAL WILL TAKE PLACE IN ST. MARY’S CEMETERY, N. TEWKSBURY, MA. AS AN EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY, DONATIONS IN BILL’S MEMORY MAY BE MADE TO THE DR. CHARLES T. WILSON SCHOLARSHIP.

You can send your contribution directly through the existing Pelham Education Foundation website at www.pelhameducationfoundation.net. All CWS donors should click the Donate button on the top right and enter “Charlie Wilson Scholarship” in the “Name for Tribute” field when completing the online

donation form. This will allow the PEF to account for funds donated specifically for the Charlie Wilson Scholarship endowment. If donors would like to mail a check, then please write "Charlie Wilson Scholarship" on the memo line of the check. Send to: Pelham Education Foundation, PO Box 8302, Pelham, NY 10803.

ARRANGEMENTS BY THE
FAY McCABE FUNERAL DIRECTORS
978-459-9222 www.faymccabe.com

Cemetery Details

St. Mary Cemetery

90 River Road
North Tewksbury, MA 01876
(978) 851-2248
<http://www.stmarycemetary.com/>

Previous Events

Calling Hours

JAN 16. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Fay McCabe Funeral Home
105 Moore Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(978) 459-9222
sean@faymccabe.com
<https://www.faymccabe.com>

Funeral

JAN 17. 10:00 AM (ET)

Fay McCabe Funeral Home
105 Moore Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(978) 459-9222
sean@faymccabe.com
<https://www.faymccabe.com>

Funeral Service

JAN 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

Fay McCabe Funeral Home
105 Moore Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(978) 459-9222
sean@faymccabe.com
<https://www.faymccabe.com>

Burial

JAN 17. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Mary Cemetery
90 River Road
North Tewksbury, MA 01876
(978) 851-2248
<http://www.stmarycemetary.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. William E. "Bill" Sarmento*

January 28, 2023 at 03:09 PM

CG

“ From the moment I first met Bill and Charles as I was very shy , I was made to feel extremely comfortable
I was immediately invited to London for lunch ,and so our amazing friendship started to grow
Throughout our long friendship ,Bill encouraged me to find my confidence , so much so that I was crossing the Atlantic Ocean on my own to New York
With the highlight of meeting some of the cast of “Eastenders” !
Many more trips entailed once Bill and Charles were installed in Maine ,flying to Boston and driving myself to Ogunquit for the first time was no mean feat But knowing the warm comfortable welcome made it all the better
The fun and experiences you gave me ,could never have been surpassed ,the wonderful friends and family I was introduced to have remained in my heart
A particular day has stayed with me ,Bill asked me to sit in with one of his classes
Little did I know in effect “I became the subject of the class “

Shy Colin was introduced to the class ,and they were asked to think of things they wanted to know about England !
I felt myself getting hotter and red , but everyone was lovely,that was a
time Bill had given me a big confidence boost

I am so grateful to have had such an amazing couple in my life ,it's going to be hard not calling and catching up with all the news ,often Bill would update me on London news before anyone else

Thank you for your friendship ,thank you for being such a wonderful human being

I will miss you both so much

Sleep well Bill

Colin Griffiths - January 15, 2023 at 05:11 PM

CG

“ 2 files added to the album *Memories of Bill*



Colin Griffiths - January 15, 2023 at 04:40 PM

DL

“ Photo of his *Charles T. Wilson*, his devoted lifetime partner of over 50 years, who we lost in April, 2022



DAVID T. LAFORTUNE - January 14, 2023 at 01:33 PM

CW

“ *Bill in 7th heaven singing at TFP Dec 2019 with Jeff at the piano; how I met Bill over 30 years ago, an enduring friendship. David LaFortune*



Charles T Wilson - January 14, 2023 at 01:29 PM

PD

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories of Bill*



Peg Tompkins DiBella - January 13, 2023 at 07:34 PM

MC

“ I met Bill "way back in the day" at The Front Porch Piano Bar & Restaurant. back when the brilliant Roger Kent could be found at the piano, and to say that Bill was one of the bright lights of TFP is, at best, a massive understatement.



A long-time summer resident, Bill adored Ogunquit, the beach, his lovely home at Channing Hall, and everything about piano bars- especially TFP. He was a constant presence there every summer, with his bright patterned shirts, his gold chains and his fabulous rings, tanned to within an inch of his life.

Occasionally his partner Charles would come along, but most of the time it was Bill, always to the right of whoever was playing, a Manhattan balanced in one hand and belting out every Broadway song or a tune from the great American songbook, occasionally favoring us with a solo like Gershwin's "Stairway to Paradise" or Sondheim's "Anyone Can Whistle" or any number of countless other songs that spanned decades and centuries.

A theatre aficionado, he spent decades writing thousands of reviews and articles about shows and was a walking compendium of American theatre history and anecdotes about those who honed their craft on the stage or behind the scenes.

And he loved to talk about it. He was a master storyteller, and his accounts of productions and stars and life in and around the Great White Way were the stuff of legend. He knew something about everything and everyone, and was able to talk about those things as if he were letting you in on a great and precious secret.

Bill and I had what I thought was a collegial relationship, based on our mutual love of The Front Porch and the kinds of music you can only find at piano bars these days, but I didn't realize how much he liked me until he invited me to a dinner party at his fabulous condo,

whereupon he greeted the small band of invitees of which I was a part with a recording of Aaron Copland's "Fanfare For The Common Man" played at full volume.

He then spent the evening like the old-school courtly host that he was, regaling us with stories, making sure our cocktail glasses were filled and our plates overflowing, keeping an eclectic selection of music going every minute, and leading the talk and the gossip and the laughter for hours and hours.

We all felt very special after all of that attention, believe me. It was clear that once Bill chose you as a friend, it was for life. I hope that in the intervening years, I lived up to his expectations. Consummate gentleman that he was, he'd have never let on if I hadn't.

I could never repay his kindness, his generosity and his friendship, but the next time I'm at the piano, I can hoist a Manhattan in Bill's name, honoring his long tenure at The Front Porch, and his memory.

He was blessed with a sweet spirit, one that he was happy to share, and he left us all richer for the knowing of him.

We'll miss you, Bill.

*Michael J. Curtiss
Allenstown, NH*

Michael J. Curtiss - January 12, 2023 at 05:40 PM

SR

“ Sean & Erin Rourke lit a candle in memory of
Mr. William E. "Bill" Sarmento



Sean & Erin Rourke - January 11, 2023 at 06:58 PM