



William D. Carmichael

February 14, 1932 - April 29, 2017

William D. Carmichael of Sarasota, beloved jazz musician, passed away on Saturday, April 29, 2017. Bill Carmichael, known as "Boots" to many of his friends was a lifetime resident of the greater Boston area, where he enjoyed an illustrious career as a musician. Music was Bill's calling, passion and livelihood. He was an accomplished reed player on alto and tenor saxophone, clarinet, flute and piccolo.

Bill moved from Massachusetts to Sarasota, Florida in 2007 with his cherished wife of 34 years, Alice N. Carmichael (Nelson), who passed on October 28, 2015. Bill and Alice shared an uncommon connection and gave each other a wonderful second act in life.

Born in Natick, MA on Valentine's Day, February 14, 1932 to William E. Carmichael and Dorothy Carmichael (Diehl), Bill grew up in an around Wellesley, Massachusetts where he graduated high school in 1950.

Bill lost his son Chris, age 18 in 1983 and his stepdaughter Vicki, age 47 in 2012.

His eldest son Jeff of Dummerston, Vermont survives him, along with stepson Ed Nelson of Middleborough, MA and stepdaughter Pam Sanderson, of Watertown, MA.

Bill pursued his talents during his high school summers by leading bands touring New England, spending summers on Moosehead Lake in Maine, Brandon, Vermont and Block Island, Rhode Island in the age of big bands and big resort hotels.

He served in the U.S. Navy from 1951-1955 during the Korean War. Because of his skillful playing, he secured a post in Seattle playing in the admiral's band of Rear Admiral Allan E. Smith. After the war, he attended the New England Conservatory in Boston where he studied for several years with Gino Cioffi, the principal clarinetist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Bill absorbed the essence of early jazz and blues along with bebop in addition to the swing era music he grew up with to develop an unmistakable sound.

Bill had that rare talent of combining the skills of a jazz player with those of a studio player. He not only had exquisite improvisational skills, but also possessed a mastery as an instrumentalist and as a fluent reader of sheet music, making him a quick study and a versatile player. He would play in the orchestra pit at a physically demanding show, reading music at the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus for 18 shows over two weeks, and then play in a jazz quintet in a nightclub. Bill also played many times with the Boston Pops, plus innumerable general business gigs throughout his career, such as weddings, private parties and restaurant shows.

Bill followed his love for jazz and pursued a long career at establishments such as the famed Monticello nightclub and the Carousel Theater, both in Framingham, Mass. as well as in the several Chateau De Ville dinner theater locations around Greater Boston. At the Monticello through the 1960s, Bill played lead alto sax in the band led by Harry DeAngelis, playing for the likes of Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra and many others. Through the 1980s, he played with the Ed, Bill and Bo Winiker Swing Orchestra at Boston's renowned

Parker House Hotel and later played on several cruises and various appearances with the Artie Shaw Orchestra, revived under Dick Johnson's leadership.

More than anything else, those who knew Bill Carmichael knew him as a modest, earnest and caring man with an uncommon personal integrity. We will miss Bill's dry, witty and quick humor, his compassion, understatement, charm, and of course, his Music.

The world has lost an irreplaceable treasure. Let's hope we can learn from his example and give back.

For those wishing to make donations in Bill Carmichael's name, please give to either:

1. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Sarasota): <http://selby.org/get-involved/give/>

2. American Cancer Society: <https://www.cancer.org/involved/donate.html>

3. J. Krishnamurti online: <http://jkrishnamurti.org/giving-and-helping/donation-programme.php>

Tribute Wall



“ *Bill possessed musical skills far surpassing most of his peers, integrity and desire to "play it right". I had the pleasure and honor to sit next to him for a number of big band gigs and will treasure those sessions forever. Bob Notari*

January 29, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ *:(I used to cut Bill and Alice's hair for 6 years. They were both a treasure. I hadn't seen Bill in a few months and it was time for his haircut, so I looked his name up and found this sad news. I am heartbroken.*

Mr. Carmichael was such a talented musician. I used to go with Alice and watch him perform. He was so well-versed in instruments. He really loved music.

And he really really loved Alice. She was his world. We would sit and cry during every single haircut session after she passed.

The Carmichaels will always live on in my memories and in my heart. They were amazing souls. I hope their souls find each other once again.

Anastasia Hedgeman - June 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ *Mr. Carmichael was an amazing person. I met him and his late wife, Alice 6 years ago. I became their hairstylist for the next 6 years. I would go with Alice to watch Bill play at his gigs. It was so fun! The love that Bill and Alice had was so inspiring. They never stopped being infatuated with each other. I am deeply saddened to hear about his passing. He was due for another haircut, and I had a sinking feeling that something happened. This was sad to read. But, I know that he is at peace and with his love.*

Anastasia Hedgeman - June 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

DP

“ When we first met Bill and Alice we immediately considered them to be friends and, as the years went by they became dear friends.

We will always remember their great love story and the beautiful music Bill made.

Dori & Bryan Post - May 12, 2017 at 12:00 AM

RD

“ I was sad to read about Bill's passing. He taught clarinet and saxophone lessons for me when I was Music Director at Wellesley High School. I played trombone in the bands with him when we played at the Monticello, Carousel theater, and Chateau de Ville, and at the Ringling Circus. He was a wonderful, talented musician,

Robert Davis - May 09, 2017 at 12:00 AM