



## Bill Price Cumbaa

March 27, 1921 - August 22, 2018

Bill passed away at his home in Leesburg on Wednesday, August 22, 2018 at age 97. He was predeceased by his parents, L.J. and Eloise (Price) Cumbaa; brother, Jay; and his wife of 54 years, Carolyn (Martin).

He was born in Columbus, Georgia on March 27, 1921. Bill was an active member of the Boy Scouts of America in his youth, and earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He majored in journalism at Emory University, receiving his B.A. in 1943. While at Emory, he worked as an usher at the legendary Loew's Grand Theatre, escorting Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable into the stars' box at the world premiere of "Gone With The Wind". At Emory, Bill was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity, and in 2013 was honored nationally as a "Significant Sig".

In April 1941 at Bill enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves, training during summers while enrolled at Emory. He was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant on April 30 and called to active duty in May 1943. He was shipped to the Pacific in May 1944 and served as a platoon leader in the 1st Marine Division. He fought on Peleliu and Okinawa, receiving two Purple Hearts for wounds received in combat, a Silver Star for valor in the battle for Peleliu, and a gold star in lieu of a second Silver Star for bravery in combat on Okinawa. Bill was stationed in China when WWII ended, and returned home with the rank of Captain. In his later years he was interviewed numerous times in print

and television as well as being featured in film documentaries on the war in the Pacific.

Bill and Carolyn were married in 1946 and moved to Florida, where Bill managed movie theatres in Inverness and Leesburg for Martin Theatres. Soon he became partner and General Manager of MCM Theatres, which grew to have screens in a number of towns and cities in North and Central Florida. In Leesburg, MCM operated the Palace, the Fain and its successor the Tropic, the Vista, and the Crest Drive-In.

Shortly after their arrival in Leesburg from Inverness in 1948, Bill and Carolyn became active members of Morrison Memorial United Methodist Church, and Bill joined the Leesburg Kiwanis Club. He served as its President in 1957, and was a member for 70 years. He was named as a George F. Hixson Fellow by Kiwanis International in 2001. Bill was also a proud member and former Commandant of the North Lake Detachment of the Marine Corps League, and for many years was an active participant in their color guard in parades and ceremonies.

Bill enjoyed fishing with his sons in the lakes of Central Florida, especially from the family's home on Lake Griffin, and on family vacations to Sanibel Island. He started running on a regular basis at age 50, and soon was competing in 10K races all over Central Florida, taking several first-place trophies in his age group. He and Carolyn enjoyed travelling, with memorable trips to the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Holy Land. In later years, Bill treated his sons and their families to unforgettable small ship cruises up the Inside Passage to Alaska, and to Peru, Ecuador, and the Galapagos Islands.

Bill is survived by his three sons, Steve (Penny), Larry (Veta), and Greg; six grandchildren, Christian (Anne), Alison, Emily (Simon), Madison, Sarah (Max), and Becky; and three great-grandchildren, Maddie, Henry, and Quinn.

The family is most grateful for the wonderful services provided the last few years by a team of caregivers from Comfort Keepers, too many to mention individually, but including several whose gentle banter, respect and loving care touched our hearts. Our thanks also to Cornerstone Hospice whose staff made the transition the last few weeks as gentle as possible.

Visitation 5-7pm, Monday, August 27th at Beyers Funeral Home, 1123 W Main St., Leesburg; funeral service Tuesday, August 28th, 10:30am in the sanctuary at Morrison United Methodist Church, 1005 W Main St., Leesburg. Interment will follow at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, 1901 County Rd 25A.

# Tribute Wall

Jl

“ Having lived in the South Pacific for many years, and having visited many battle fields of WWII, it was an honor to have known this "Greatest Generation" Marine. I first met Bill on Peleliu in 2004, and met him again three times in past three years. One fine gentleman! Semper Fi Bill!

Jennings Bunn II - August 29, 2018 at 07:32 PM

Jl

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Jennings Bunn II - August 29, 2018 at 07:27 PM

NS

“ My deepest sympathy to Bill Cumbaa's family. I am Bill's cousin Nell Cumbaa Smith. Our families were very closely related many years ago, while we all lived on Rose Hill in Columbus, GA. We enjoyed close family togetherness growing up together when we were children and through our high school days. After marriage and moving our paths parted. My cousin L.J. and Eloise with sons Bill and Jay will always have a special place in my heart. I am now "95 Nell". I live with my daughter in DE.  
I am thinking of all of you Cumbaas through your sadness. God Bless all of you.  
Much love,  
Nell

Nell Cumbaa Smith - August 29, 2018 at 02:22 PM

TW

“ Carol and I are very honored to have known Bill Cumbaa and to have called him our friend.

*He had a warm sense of humor and a ready wit. He was always poking fun at himself and gave a good-natured ribbing, as well. He was a kind and generous man who was friendly to all.*

*He always made us feel welcome and that he was happy to be sharing whatever experience he was with us. It was a joy to spend time with Bill.*

*Bill gave of himself whenever asked. He was always humble and self-deprecating. Bill found the best in everyone.*

*Bill let us all know that he loved his family and he loved his country. He loved his wife Carolyn and together they raised three very fine men.*

*Many people would not know Bill's story of service until they read it in his final chapter- his obituary. All of those accomplishments and all of the self-sacrifice and service were kept mostly to himself. In every sense, he was a true hero.*

*It is rare to encounter an individual as impactful as Bill Cumbaa. We are thankful to have known Bill and we are thankful for the impact he had on our lives and those of our children. Bill Cumbaa provided an excellent example of a life well led.*

*Along with many others, we will miss him greatly.*

*May God bless Bill and his family.*

*With warm memories,  
Ted and Carol White*

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**Ted and Carol White** - August 27, 2018 at 01:38 PM

VB

“ I am so very sorry for the loss of your father. I knew Bill from our running days in Leesburg and I can still see Bill running in his striped Nike shorts! And, yes, Bill was a consistent age group winner. Although, I was about 30 years younger than Bill, he was always very kind and encouraging to me. A real gentleman. May God grant you and your family a special blessing during this time of sorrow.

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**Victoria Fox Bucher** - August 27, 2018 at 11:48 AM

RC

“ i am very proud to have known bill. a true southern gentleman and a true marine. semper fi marine. condolences to the family. a much loved man.

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**ron coletti** - August 27, 2018 at 09:55 AM

SP

“ To the family of Bill Cumbaa, please accept the most sincere condolences due to Bill's passing. I knew Bill for most of my 68 years of life. I knew Bill to be a man of unquestioned integrity. He set the standard for being a husband, father, grandfather and friend. Marybeth and I had the pleasure as serving as legal counsel to Bill's family for over 30 years. I have never represented a more honest and caring person. His obituary describes Bill's long and interesting life.

*Bil, rest in peace. Your life was well lived.*

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**Steve Pullum** - August 26, 2018 at 07:20 PM

SG

“ *Semper Fi Marine! Thank you for your service. Rest In Peace!*

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**Sheriff Peyton C. Grinnell** - August 26, 2018 at 06:14 PM

MT

“ My deepest sympathy to the family. Mr Cumbaa was a great man. Greg and I were classmates at LHS, my sisters were classmates with Steve and our father was friends with Bill. Our families go way back together. I remember going to the Tropic as a kid, Mr Cumbaa was always so good to us. I could go down there for the Saturday matinee and many times watched the movie twice.

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**Matt Tutton** - August 26, 2018 at 10:09 AM

RW

“ Our condolences. Mr. Cumbaa was the best "boss" I ever worked for.

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**Randy & Susan Walker** - August 26, 2018 at 07:39 AM

NS

“ Sending my thoughts to your family.



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**Nancy Stinson** - August 25, 2018 at 11:32 PM

DS

“ All Honor to Your Name, Brother Bill...May you rest in the Lord's Peace...And consolation to those you left behind...

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**Dr. and Mrs. Daivd K. Smith** - August 25, 2018 at 02:05 PM

AY

“ *My and Cheryl's condolences to the family. Bill was a great man and a true american HERO !*



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**Allen Yancey** - August 25, 2018 at 01:11 PM

LS

“ *Captain Bill always had a kind word for me as I entered any of his theaters. As I learned more about him my respect and admiration grew. Now, I offer my sincere condolences to his family and friends as I crisply salute one of America's true hero's. Rest in peace Sir.*



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**L. Pierce Standridge** - August 25, 2018 at 11:29 AM

RS

“ *You are loved and will be missed. RIP*



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**Roger Smith** - August 25, 2018 at 09:14 AM

RS

“ *I feel so honor to have known and worked with Bill. He holds a very special place in my heart. My prayer and love for him and all his family. He will be missed. RIP Captain*

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**Roger Smith** - August 25, 2018 at 09:11 AM

JW

“ We feel fortunate to have met Grandpa Cumbaa when Max married Sarah and to have heard some of the amazing stories he shared about his service to our country. It was an honor to have known him, and we offer our condolences to his loving family.



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**John and Allison Williams** - August 24, 2018 at 05:14 PM

VH

“ May God hold you forever in his hands.



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**Veta, Larry, Becky , Sarah, Max, Maddie, and Henry** - August 24, 2018 at 03:22 PM