



William L. McLean III

October 4, 1927 - August 27, 2011

William L. McLean III, a long time newspaper industry executive, philanthropist, devoted family man and gentleman, died on August 27, 2011 after a brief but typically stubborn battle with leukemia. He graduated from Millbrook School in 1945 and Princeton University in 1949. He shared nearly 57 years of marriage with his beloved wife, Elizabeth Peterson McLean. He was 83.

Bill had a long and distinguished record of contributions to the newspaper industry. His newspaper career began in 1949 at the Coatesville (PA) Record, where he sold advertising following graduation from Princeton University. At Princeton, he served on the editorial staff of the Daily Princetonian. Following a year at Coatesville, he moved to the Evening and Sunday Bulletin in Philadelphia. The Bulletin was a family business; Bill was the grandson of the publisher who had purchased the Bulletin in 1895.

Bill McLean's early career exposed him to nearly every department in the newspaper and by the late 1960's he moved into senior management.

From 1975 to 1980 he served as editor and publisher of the newspaper, which was then the largest circulation evening newspaper in the United States.

After the McLean family sold the Bulletin Company in 1980, Bill was in a position to take early retirement, but instead, his passion for the business led him to launch a second newspaper career by developing a new family-owned organization, Independent Publications, Inc. It is a diversified organization that includes a newspaper division with newspapers in three states. Bill was an early advocate for the potential of Sunday newspapers in smaller markets, and IPI successfully launched Sunday newspapers in their markets in the 1980s. Bill served as CEO of Independent Publications until 2001, and chairman of the board until 2010.

Bill served as the president of what is now the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association in 1964. As a stalwart supporter of the Association, he also served several terms as Trustee of the PNA Foundation, and was recognized with a PNA Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003. He was also a long time member of the Newspaper Association of America.

Bill was chairman of a family foundation, the McLean Contributionship, until 2010. He had been associated with the Contributionship since 1954, and continued to serve as a trustee of the Contributionship and a director of IPI until his death.

He had a long list of newspaper industry and community endeavors, including leadership roles with the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia and the Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. He served on the vestry of the Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr, PA and was a member of the Merion Cricket Club. He was one of the longest-term members of the Blooming Grove Hunting and Fishing Club in Pike County, Pennsylvania, where he vigorously engaged in fly fishing and hunting upland game. As much as he loved hunting and fishing, his greater love was to share those sports with his children and grandchildren, which he did at every opportunity. Two generations benefitted from his patient coaching and uncanny ability to coax a trout into taking the fly. Blooming Grove was a source of solitude and life-long friendships, and it was his special place for relaxation and renewal.

Bill also enjoyed birding and gardening and was especially fond of his vegetable and fruit garden. He cared deeply about the earth and its living creatures. He was a dedicated environmentalist before that word was invented, and he gave generously of his time to many conservation organizations over the years. He had a great passion for the natural world and its inhabitants, and he and Elizabeth continued to travel together until his past few weeks. Bill was particularly fond of the Aigas Field Centre in the Scottish Highlands, and went there earlier this summer. As usual, he caught several trout in the estate's loch.

Despite a long struggle with macular degeneration, which made reading very

difficult, Bill's passion for the written word was not diminished. With the assistance of his friends, family and technology, he continued to read and write up until his death.

Bill was the son of "Big Bill" McLean and Eleanor Bushnell McLean. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and his children, Lisa McLean, Will McLean and his wife Wendy, H. Brooke Katzenbach and her husband Tom, Sandra McLean and Ward McLean and his wife Kelly, five grandchildren and his sister, Ray McLean Gordon. He was predeceased by a daughter, Laura.

A memorial service will be held at the Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr on October 1st at 11 a.m. Memorial contributions may be made to the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, the Church of the Redeemer, or any charity that Bill was known to support.

Tribute Wall



“ *Bill was a gallant gentleman and one of Blooming Grove's most stalwart members. His environmental talents are irreplaceable. He will be sorely missed.* *James M. & Elizabeth F. Brown*”

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