

William Ernest Adamson

Died: January 14, 1983

Bill died of cancer at the early age of 41 in Welborn Baptist Memorial Hospital, in Evansville, Indiana, the same hospital where he had worked as a pathologist since 1975.

Though he was born in Iowa, he came to Dartmouth from Frederick, Maryland, where he went to high school and was an honors graduate. He worked on the school newspaper there, played flute in the school orchestra and band, and ran and lettered in cross-country as a member of the school's track team.

Before he came to Dartmouth in 1957 he had already learned how to fly an airplane in Frederick, having obtained a pilot's license there before even learning to drive a car. Our classmate Tom Conger knew him as a freshman, and writes that "Bill was a really decent guy, an outdoorsman and a pilot," who was "forever sneaking off to Lebanon to fly light aircraft." Fred Schwab recalls accompanying him on one such occasion. "When we got to the end of the runway," Fred writes, "Bill asked me to look to the right to see if anything was coming. It wasn't." Piloting was a hobby Bill pursued after Dartmouth, flying his own plane cross-country for many years.

Bill also enjoyed fly-fishing, an art form he evidently refined outside the dormitory during his freshman year. Tom Conger (again) chronicles his observations of Bill's moves one such day.

"I walked out behind Richardson Hall," Tom writes, "and there was Bill practicing his fly casting. I couldn't believe anybody could cast a line with so little effort, with such control, without a sinker and some kind of plug at the end. He in turn couldn't believe there was actually a doofus on campus who'd never been fly-fishing."

Jim White, who became friends with Bill in their freshman year, remembers visiting Bill and his family at their family estate (Wellcome Farms) outside Frederick, Maryland and escorting Bill's sister to a debutante ball, then later becoming friends with her.

After Dartmouth, Bill studied meteorology for a year at New York University, then served as a Lieutenant in the Air Force in Duluth, Minnesota. He graduated from Georgetown University Medical School in 1969, did an internship at Madigan Hospital at Fort Lewis near Tacoma, Washington, and then did his residency in pathology at the University of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Professionally, he received many awards for his research and publications.

Bill had two daughters, Marie Noelle and Annik, and two sons, Eric and William. He is not listed in the Aegis, nor is he mentioned in the 25th and 40th reunion yearbooks.