

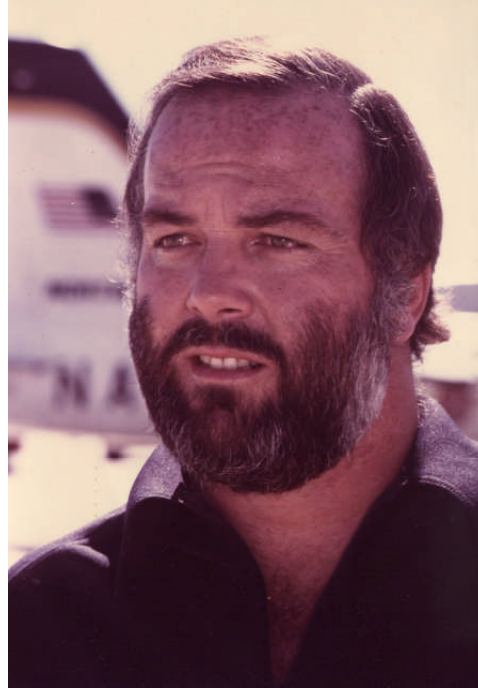
William Morrison Cline Miller

Died: December 25, 2010

Bill died at his home in Malibu, California of congestive heart failure on Saturday, December 25, 2010. He was 71.

He was born nearby in Santa Monica, where he attended Lincoln Junior High School in the early 1950's. That is where, and when, he met his future wife Judy, to whom he was married for nearly 50 years until the time of his death. At Santa Monica High School, he was an honors student, worked on the newspaper, and served as co-captain of the football team.

At Dartmouth, Bill majored in English and became a member of Theta Delta Chi and its social chairman. In his sophomore year he served on his dormitory committee and the Interdormitory Council. As a senior he was a member of Dragon.



Bill was a promising athlete, though his athletic career at Dartmouth took a fork in the road, in a telling direction, from football to rugby, a sport in which fun is legend. Jim (Mac) McElhinney, his roommate during all four years, his fraternity brother, and his life-long friend since 1957, tells the back-story. Now a doctor, Mac spoke at Bill's memorial service, and shared his memories in an e-mail in February 2011.

In his eulogy, Mac talked about the day when he and Bill first arrived in Hanover their freshman year:

My first meeting with Bill was not face-to-face. I was out for freshman football and Bill was on the freshman trip. When the dorms opened, he was there first, and he put his stuff on the preferable bunk. This included his size 9 TCPS's (black and white Tony Curtis Pimp Shoes). When I came into the room, I decided that I would move his gear to the top bunk. I left the room, and when I came back, my stuff was on the top and his was back where he originally put it. I moved it back to the top. I'm not sure I remember how this ended up, but it seemed to work out.

Mac says Bill had scholarships to play football at the University of Southern California and Stanford, but chose Dartmouth, where he did not have a scholarship. His high school coach had evidently been a college friend of Dartmouth coach, (Bullet) Bob Blackman.

Besides, he didn't need a scholarship. One of a number of anecdotes Mac shared about Bill was that he "had a college fund via Howard Hughes. Bill's father was a pilot for Hughes and lost his life flying for Hughes. Mr. Hughes intermittently checked up on Bill's grades."

In his first two years at Dartmouth, Bill played football. "He was able to move the biggest and most experienced defensive players around the field — it was impressive," says Mac, who played with him. But Bill was twice injured, once as a freshman, again as a sophomore, and so switched to rugby, which he played all four years, despite limiting injuries.

Around the time of his sophomore year, Bill's persona fell into sharper profile. Mac again tells the story:

At the beginning of the year, Bill and I pledged Theta Delta, along with many others who became long time friends. This was about the time that Bill morphed into "Fatz." This was a moniker that he enjoyed. In fact, he modified and expanded both into the name and into the role. "Malibu Fatz" became the label of choice, and one he kept for the rest of his life.

"Basically, Fatz tried to make everything he did in life fun," says Mac. "That didn't mean he wasn't serious, but things just had to be fun."

Thus it was, says Mac:

During our sophomore year, Bill acquired a car. It was a 1959 Chevy. This became the Lunchmobile, and had NH plates "LUNCH," to identify his transportation. We took many road trips all over the northeast in the Lunchmobile, with and without refreshments, usually with.

In 1963, after Dartmouth, Bill moved to Malibu where he lived for the next 47 years. It started out, with Mac at his side, in by now typical fashion:

We rented a little place, called the Pico Palace. It was not high end, but affordable, with a swimming pool and a direct route to the beach. After mornings at Santa Monica City College taking zoology, I worked on the beach, managing three Neeney's Famous Weenies hotspots on the beach. Bill worked as a transportation engineer—parking lot attendant, for Ted's Restaurant.

Bill moved on in his career, to marketing at Northrop, later becoming vice-president for advertising at U. S. News & World Report. He and Mac were respective best men at each

other's wedding, Mac at Bill's in 1962 (when, says Mac, Bill married his "high school sweetheart, 'the Native' Judy Pringle"), and Mac got married in 1964 in Denver.

Bill's professional and civic life and his circle of friends expanded over the years, as *The Malibu Times* wrote in an obituary on the occasion of his passing. He coached the Malibu Mustangs and the Malibu Little League for more than 10 years, it wrote. He served on the board of the La Costa Beach Club, on the Pepperdine University Crest Advisory Board, and the State Geology Board (named to it by then Governor Ronald Reagan).

Somehow, Bill took his affiliations a step beyond. He reportedly dubbed himself "Captain of the Royal Malibu Pursuit Squadron," wearing a captain's hat at parties.

Our classmate Oscar Arslanian wrote after Bill's death that:

Fatz was a member of the "Dartmouth Goes Hollywood" mini-reunion committee in '94. It meant so much to me, because I got to spend a great deal of time with him. I know it meant a lot to him as well, because he had an opportunity to express himself with his '61 Dartmouth community. I loved it when he asked to be identified on the reunion letterhead as "Capt. Billy Bitchen of the Royal Malibu Pursuit Squadron."

Fritz Kern, another of our classmates, and Bill's fellow Californian, recalls what must have been some quality time on-the-road with Bill, that he wrote about in an e-mail two weeks after Bill's death:

For a few years, I was his client. He was selling ad space for US News & World Report and later on for Newsweek, and I was buying it (through my ad agency) for Isuzu. Many very fun lunches at the Pacific Dining Car in LA, and some memorable times in Malibu, when Janis and I would meet up with Bill and Judy for part of a weekend. I'll never forget when the fires devastated the Malibu hills and the Millers lost a couple of houses and nearly lost the third one, which was their residence on Pacific Coast Highway. One of the great storytellers, he was.

In addition to the above, my favorite and most vivid memory of Bill was escorting him to Baja California for a few days of some down and dirty off-roading in some extremely remote areas. We were part of a group of guys who did this regularly, taking our vehicles to the limit over treacherous terrain, and taking our heads/tummies to the limit with Mexican food and cerveza. This was the first such outing for Bill. By the time we emerged at the U.S. re-entry portal, we looked so bedraggled and bleary-eyed that the border agents invited us out of the vehicle and into their office for a chat, while their colleagues searched every inch of our Isuzu Trooper. Bill charmed them, and we were on our way with minimal delay.

I will always regret that as Bill's health started seriously failing him, our contact diminished to zero. I'll always treasure the time I had with him, however.

Bill's last years must have been a struggle. Two days after his death, Jim Roussel wrote to a number of Fatz's Dartmouth friends, to learn what had happened. Mac was one of them. The account that emerged was not good. Mac evidently reported that apparently Fatz had been "suffering from heart, spinal problems and diabetes for several years and had been in a wheelchair."

Bill died on Christmas Day. In his February 2011 e-mail, Mac wrote that, "Bill had slept in, told Judy he was tired, then later she went in and found him."

Bill's obituary in *The Malibu Times* (December 29, 2010) is accompanied by an online guestbook, in which Bill's friends, not necessarily from Dartmouth, or his family members were invited to write tributes. Some tributes, quoted below and only slightly edited, impart a sense of how the Fatz we knew was known by others, who addressed their sentiments directly to Bill:

Suzi wrote:

"There are so many memories of how you lived your life, and you did live to the fullest and the best of times. I can still see that tennis racquet being thrown into the Las Flores Creek from over the fence of the tennis courts. You bent quite a few of those racquets; wonder how much it cost you? And the parties, whew how you could party."

Cassie wrote:

"You lived your life doing the right things, for the right reasons, with commitment, devotion and integrity. Such a rare and respected man you were. Your sense of humor, wit and intellect will be in our memories always. You were always the anchorman, in so many ways, so true and endearing. Your friendship and support was never ending to all you knew. Thank you for the honor of sharing your life with all of us and your family since Lincoln Jr. High School in Santa Monica. You will be always be remembered and loved by those who had the privilege of knowing you, dear friend. "

Jim wrote:

"Smooth Sailing and Wallowing My Friend. I count myself as one lucky guy for having known you. All our lives have been enriched by your presence and your example. We had no better Kern River "Kaptain," "Range Master," and Barbecue Cowboy Buckaroo than you."

Our classmate Tom Conger wrote an e-mail three days after Bill died. "Well, it happened," Tom said, "on my birthday. Bill 'Malibu Fatz' Miller, just about my best buddy in Hanover — and after — checked in his chips."

Just hours later, Tom wrote to over a score of Bill's friends about the passing of their friend Fatz:

Gents: I guess Mac and I knew, even back in college, that this was coming. But the big guy kept on keepin' on; and maybe we got complacent over the years — and miles, thinking he was gonna be there with the rest of us at our 50th — or something. But he's not. As Mac notes, this is pretty much the first one to hit this close to home. And one whom everybody knew, and loved — or maybe admired. So just a reminder to carpe each freakin' diem with unbounded vigah. And think good thoughts of those who've slipped away. One day each one of us will do the same. Me ke aloha pumehana, tc.

Bill had two children, Cassie Halstead and Barron Miller, by whom he was survived, in addition to his wife Judy.