



William F. Harms

February 20, 2024

William “Bill” Frederick Harms, 88, a longtime resident of Bloomfield, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at his home.

Bill was born in Freeport, NY on April 27, 1935. He was the oldest son of the late August and Ella (Ryder) Harms. He graduated from Freeport High School, Freeport, NY in 1953 and Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA in 1957 with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

Bill married the love of his life, Lorna Joan Lawrence, whom he had known since he was two, on December 26, 1955. They were married for 60 years before her passing in 2016.

Bill began his career in 1957 as a Principal Flight Test Engineer at Republic Aviation/Fairchild Aircraft in Farmingdale, NY. During his tenure there, he prepared advanced planning and detailed flight plans and coordinated and monitored test flights for the F-105, operated during the Vietnam War by the USAF. He also conducted the entire flight test program on the A-10 prototype aircraft, which operated in the Gulf War. At a dedication at the New England Air Museum, a USAF Brigadier General who flew the A-10 Warthog, called it “a weapon on wings” and spoke about its ability to fly “low and slow” with the plane’s big gatling gun over our troops on the ground in urgent need of support. In addition, Bill conducted the full flight test program, including vertical takeoffs and landings and transitions between vertical and horizontal flight on the XV-5A, an experimental vertical takeoff/landing aircraft. One of the highlights of his time at Republic was his ride in the rear seat of the F105F,

taking the plane to its limits in a supersonic structural integrity proving flight. He was also honored to be in the same place as Chuck Yeager at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

Fitting with his love for jet planes, Bill also loved working on and driving sports cars. He especially liked MG's, sequentially owning six, of different models and colors, during his flight test years. The baby blue convertible was his favorite!

Bill later became a Product Liability Claims Manager at Associated Aviation Underwriters in New York City before moving to Connecticut to take the position of Product Liability Technical Liaison Engineer for the Legal Department at United Technologies and Pratt & Whitney Aircraft. He was there until his retirement in 1992.

Bill and Lorna were avid travelers in their younger years and Bill visited 49 of the 50 states, missing only Hawaii. He often took his family on "station wagon adventures" to visit a scenic canyon, national park, or state capitol. Hand in hand with that, Bill was an avid photographer, taking thousands of amazing slides and photos of scenery, family, and aviation. To reduce film developing costs, he constructed his own dark room in the backyard!

Bill is survived and will be remembered by his children, David Harms and his wife, Carrie of Winsted; Donna Basler and her husband, Darrell of East Hartford; and Diane Forader of Merritt Island, FL; his grandchildren, Ginger Harms and her partner, Ray, Jesse Harms and his partner, Vanessa, Christopher Basler and his wife, Lauren, and Bryan Basler; and his great grandchildren, Jazmyn, Anne Marie, Matthew, Mackenzie, Hailey and Sophia. He is also survived by his brother, Ken Harms and his wife Mary Lou and his sister, Ginny Baldwin and her husband Howard, and several nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents and beloved wife, Bill was predeceased by his daughter-in-law, Cindy Harms and son-in-law, Mark Forader.

We would like to lovingly acknowledge his very close friend, Suzanne Horrigan, who was a special companion for the past 7 years and whom he truly treasured.

The funeral will be Wednesday, February 28th beginning with calling hours from 10 am-12pm at the Molloy Funeral Home, 906 Farmington Ave., West Hartford. A funeral service will follow at 12:00 pm at the funeral home. Burial will be in Mt. View Cemetery, Bloomfield. Donation in his memory may be made to The New England Air Museum at www.neam.org or the Alzheimer's Association at www.alz.org. Online expressions of sympathy may be made at www.molloyfuneralhome.com

Please use below link for streaming the funeral service:

<https://client.tribucast.com/tcid/5602424397>

Cemetery Details

Mt. View Cemetery

26 Mt. Ave.
Bloomfield, CT

Previous Events

Calling Hours

FEB 28. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home
906 Farmington Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06119
(860) 232-1322

Funeral Service

FEB 28. 12:00 PM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home
906 Farmington Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06119
(860) 232-1322

Tribute Wall



“ *Molloy Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of William F. Harms*



Molloy Funeral Home - February 26, 2024 at 11:15 AM

TC

“ *Tony, Jan, Elizabeth, Cam, Catherine purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of William F. Harms.*



Tony, Jan, Elizabeth, Cam, Catherine - February 26, 2024 at 03:29 PM



“ *Blue Caribbean Bouquet was purchased for the family of William F. Harms.*



February 22, 2024 at 06:06 PM

GI

“ 14 files added to the album Misc. photos and videos



Ginger - February 22, 2024 at 06:04 PM