



William Ruthenberg

William was born in Detroit, Michigan, on Lakepointe Avenue to Elmer H. and Pauline G. (Dornbrock) Ruthenberg. He was one of five children. He passed away in St. Augustine, FL at the age of 83.

After graduating from Cass Technical High School in 1957, Bill joined the Don Large Make Way For Youth Chorus, which sang on live radio at WJR in Detroit.

Studying voice at the Detroit Conservatory prepared him for his audition with the US Army Chorus, to which he was accepted and sang in from 1961 to 1964. After his stint with the Army Chorus, he pursued a career in New York City as a freelance studio singer, singing on commercials, and performing the bass voice in the Ajax cleanser commercial, "Use Ajax, (bum bum) the foaming cleanser." He joined the Ray Charles Singers with Perry Como from 1965 until the show ended in the 1970s. He also performed in the Rankin & Bass Christmas movies Frosty the Snowman, Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer, and The Year Without Santa Claus. 1975 brought him and his family to Eastern Long Island where he reinvented himself as a carpenter. "Country Home Builders" was active until 1989 when his wife, Gloria, died after a long illness.

He met Martine Weaver the following year while singing in the local Choral Society, and they were married in 1992. After retiring in 1996, they moved to Saint Augustine, FL. Both joined the Saint Augustine Community Chorus, and Bill played the recorder in The Glad Melody Gang. He then joined "Dulcinea,"

an Early Music Consort. He wrote arrangements of music from the 1500's and 1600's for the group to perform. The American Recorder magazine published one of Bill's recorder pieces, entitled "Faded Memories." MLE #45 (Vol. LIII, No. 4). Bill also loved to draw and paint, and many of his works were purchased at the Bethel (VT) Historical Society's art shows, where the couple owns a summer home.

Bill is survived by his loving wife, Martine; his son, Eric; and grandchildren, Peter, Caroline, and Michael. He was predeceased by his first wife, Gloria (Schwartzenberg) Ruthenberg, his brother Elmer (Al) Ruthenberg, sister Marian (Ruthenberg) Weaver, sister Laura (Ruthenberg) Clark, and brother Jim Ruthenberg.

Bill's life had many turns, but he often said, "What a fantastic life I have lead, and how fortunate I have been." omnia vincit Amor

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the Bethel Historical Society, P. O. Box 25, Bethel, Vermont 05032, or to the American Cancer Society (a chapter near you), or to the American Recorder Society, PO Box 480054, Charlotte, NC 28269-5300.