



Remembering our brothers who have passed from this life

HILL, WILMER ATLEE JR. '51

Wilmer Atlee Hill Jr., the entertainer and band teacher, died of cancer 20 March 2004 at the University of Virginia Hospital in Charlottesville, VA.

He was a 1951 graduate of Augusta Military Academy and a 1955 graduate of the Shenandoah Conservatory of Music. He taught band in three public school divisions in Augusta, Page, and Nelson Counties. He taught at Churchville High and North River between 1955-1956, Nelson County Elementary School between 1956-1960, Page County High School between 1960-1962, Wilson Memorial High School between 1962-1970, Stuart Draft High School between 1970-1976 and at Augusta Military Academy between 1978-1982.

"He was a wonderful guy," said Blair Arbogast, Staunton, who was a drum major in 1975 in the Stuarts Draft High School marching band, directed by Hill. When band members were stressed out, "he'd sit down and play some boogie." Arbogast said, "He could tear a piano up." Described by those who knew him as an upbeat person, Hill "just loved

life," his wife said. "He was always cutting up and kidding and joking, even in the hospital."

Hill directed church choirs for 45 years, sang in a trio called the "Retreads," and was a member of the Celebration Singers. In his later years Hill, called "The Music Man" by many, was an entertainer who would play in nursing homes, where residents would "perk up" when Hill played music from their generation. "First thing you'd know, they'd be moving their heads or tapping their feet," said his wife. "He added a lot of joy to people's lives through his music."

Hill chose for his epitaph the words: "Thanks to God and music for granting me the ultimate expression of my being." He is buried in the Clover Hill Methodist Church Cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Beulah Gilmer Hill; a daughter, Kimberley Hill of Stuarts Draft, VA; two stepdaughters, Linda Clark and her husband Burt of Staunton, VA; and Ruth Shull and her husband, Lee, of Staunton, VA. Four step-grandsons, one step-granddaughter, and one great-step-grandson also survive him.

Hill attended Augusta for four years: Sergeant, Band Company, YMCA, Cadet Choir.

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