

Nomination for the Shirley Dickens Memorial Tribute

William (Bill) Stilling (1925-2019)

William Stilling, known as Bill, is being honored with the Shirley Dickens Memorial Tribute Award due to his extraordinary end-of-life financial gift to the Fellowship. It has allowed us to complete the sanctuary remodel and to fund fully the Audio-Visual upgrades that had been initially planned for phased implementation. In addition, 20% of the funds have been placed in our Endowment Fund to support AUUF's future.

Bill was born in Seattle, Washington on November 4, 1925 and was raised in Cottage Grove, Oregon, a small town south of Eugene. His parents were both Danish immigrants, and he worked as the delivery boy for the grocery store they owned outside of school hours. He was an only child. He graduated as Salutatorian from high school in 1943.

In December 1943, after his first semester of college, Bill entered active duty in the Army. At the end of World War II, from 1945-6, Bill served in the Philippines during the United States occupation. He began collecting stamps there, which continued as a life-long hobby. He was a life member of the local and national stamp collector's clubs. He left us his extensive collection, which we were able to sell through an on-line auction.

Bill received a degree in Accounting from the University of Oregon in 1949, and then earned his Certificate in Public Accounting in 1955. In the mid-60's, Bill moved to Anchorage and worked as a CPA for Arthur Young & Company and then for the Municipality of Anchorage. He was very active in various community organizations, including Boy Scouts, Habitat for Humanity (a founding member), UAA Accounting Club, and the Kiwanis. He grew beautiful flowers, including many roses in pots, continuing his mother's hobby. Bill did not marry or have children.

He became a member of the Fellowship in 1966, shortly after moving to Anchorage. Although he was more conservative than most everyone else at AUUF, he found friendship in our community and satisfaction in our programs. He was on the Board and Treasurer in the 1990's. He also lent his accounting expertise to the UU Community Services non-profit from 1992-2007. He received recognition as a long-time member in 2005.

Members recall him as a quiet man who was very interested in history, classical music, art, travel, and economics. He read the Economist Magazine regularly and was always advocating for spending conservatively. One member recalls "Bill enjoyed embodying the word, 'cantankerous.' His first response to most questions was either a scoff or a 'No.' He was not known for his optimism." He never let us know he had included us in his will.

In his later years, he moved into the Anchorage Pioneer Home. Some of our members helped him with various tasks and errands as he aged. Bill died peacefully in his room on January 20, 2019. His cremains are interred at Rest Haven Memorial Park in Eugene, Oregon, where his parents are.