



## William W. Richardson III

August 12, 1939 - December 11, 2017

It is with sadness that the family of William W. “Billy” Richardson III announced his death on Monday, Dec. 11, 2017, at the age of 78. He died peacefully at Chelsea, his beloved home of more than 50 years.

Born Aug. 12, 1939, to William and Ellen Richardson, Billy was the oldest of three children. He grew up in New Kent County and graduated from New Kent High School. Following in his father’s footsteps, he attended The College of William & Mary where he graduated –between hangovers–from law school in 1966. Upon his father’s tragic death, Billy took over his law practice in Providence Forge where he practiced for more than 30 years. During his career, he also served as commissioner of accounts for New Kent County. He also took over his mother’s and father’s home—Chelsea—and committed himself to it like Scarlett O’Hara did to Tara. The land along the Mattaponi River would always be his first love, and he could often be found shirtless sitting behind the wheel of his Wheel Horse lawn mower with young son, Erik, leading the charge—unknowingly learning the ropes of caring for the never-ending yard work that would ensue. Yes, Billy had a knack for putting his children to work in a game-like fashion, rewarding the winner of “cigarette butt-pick-up” or “who can give Daddy the best massage” with a cherry slush puppy from the West Point Pilot gas station.

Always the life of the party, Billy believed strongly in a “work hard, play harder” philosophy. Happiest when surrounded by others, Billy set the mood with his signature sounds—from Earth, Wind & Fire to Eric Clapton to a classical

Mozart concerto blaring from hidden speakers situated across the property. He knew no stranger, opening his doors and his acreage to a revolving door of parties—from the toga variety to skinny dips in the pool to a series of legendary black tie affairs. He could recite one dirty joke after another without skipping a beat, and often was the last to leave the dance floor.

He taught his daughter, Christie, to dance without leading and to dive without making too much of a splash. His son learned that the job wasn't worth doing if you didn't do it right the first time.

And he had to accept that Parkinson's disease would lead his feet off the dance floor, diabetes would tame his tolerance, and years of sunning without sunscreen would put an end to his summer skinny dips. Billy is survived by his brother, Carter Richardson (Nancy); sister, Barbara Pearson (Melvin); son, Erik; daughter, Christie (DJ); four grandchildren, Brianna, Ian, Sydney and Morgan; caregiver, Don Lee Masterson; best friends, Bill and Karen Bennett; extended family and friends.

A private burial will be held Monday, Dec. 18, followed by a 2 p.m. memorial service at Vincent Funeral Home, 9923 Pocahontas Trail, Providence Forge. Memorial contributions may be made to the West Point Rescue Squad, PO Box X, West Point, VA 23181.

# Tribute Wall

TB

“ *Teresa Blachura lit a candle in memory of William W. Richardson III*



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**Teresa Blachura** - November 14, 2024 at 07:45 PM

TB

“ *I absolutely loved Billy! I'm heartbroken to hear of his passing!! Not to long ago I left him a voice message. The first day I met him we were the best of friends! Thank you to Gidget Prater Willis for introducing him to me! We had a blast at Chelsea Plantation and then proceeded to go to the Urbanna Oyster Festival, how much fun that was! Later we saw each other off and on in Richmond and the last time I saw him was at Gidget's wedding! Through the years we talked occasionally over the phone! He was the most personal and loving person I believe I have ever met! Love, prayers and condolences to his beloved family! You will be forever in my heart and thoughts! Until we meet again!! Love you forever and always!!*

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**Teresa Blachura** - November 14, 2024 at 07:43 PM

LG

“ So I was living in the school and it was late Billy and I were drinking and walking around and stepped into the green house. Billy had an orange tree with one orange.

We were laughing and he was showing me the orange and he tripped stumbled or something and reach out and latched on the orange. He didn't fall but the orange was not exactly connected any more.

I thought he was going to cry. We tried to eat it but it wasn't ripe. A great place to live. Rest In Peace Billy!

With respect,

Lowell Garner 540-706-4747

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lowell garner - September 16, 2021 at 04:28 PM

SM

“ Just learned of Billys passing while visiting William & Mary today. He was definitely the life of every party with his wit, charm and dancing feet.

I think billy had rhythm in his fingertips and his mind was just as agile.

As a young Willam and Mary student, visiting Chelsea with Carter, I got to know and love the Richardson family and Gus who even named a bull after me!

EB opened her heart and home to all, just as Billy later did, even later when challenged by Parkinson's.

I have the fond memories of Chelsea and Billy strutting around and those fun filled days. Teddy Hall McBay

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Sharon Teddy McBay - November 06, 2020 at 05:10 AM

LE

*I had lost touch with Billy and actually last visited Chelsea in 2011. It is with great sadness that I post these comments. Billy told me about the illnesses at that time, but he still demanded to give my youngest daughters a tour of Chelsea. Of course, the tour included his remarkable knowledge and wit. We met in 1971, at VCU, where Billy was there, in traction. Even with that situation, his humor shone through. From that moment we became good friends. Soon after I had many visits to Chelsea and a few road trips with Billy, to Georgetown (from what I recall). But I will always remember Billy with happy thoughts. He brought so much joy to me and all of my friends who had the good fortune to meet him. May all of the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe raise a glass to Billy. Hip hip horray! We'll see you on the big plantation Billy! LOVE YOU GOOD BUDDY, Lonnie A Ellis, Jr.*

Lonnie Ellis - May 14, 2021 at 06:14 PM

BH

“ Billy Hart lit a candle in memory of William W. Richardson III



Billy Hart - December 18, 2017 at 03:38 PM



“ Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White was purchased for the family of William W. Richardson III.



December 17, 2017 at 04:33 PM

VR

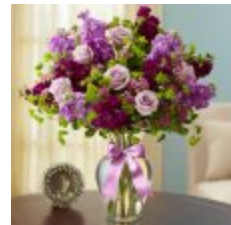
“ Vickie, John Roane lit a candle in memory of William W. Richardson III



Vickie, John Roane - December 17, 2017 at 03:23 PM



“ Shades of Purple was purchased for the family of William W. Richardson III.



December 17, 2017 at 10:15 AM

JT

“ Billy was one of a kind: scholar, partier, gentleman. He will live on forever in my memories, even if a few of those memories are a little hazy. My best wishes for Billy as he embarks on his next great adventure, and my condolences to the boxwoods I fell into, over, or through at Chelsea. Thank you, Bill, for being a great guy and a great friend. J&B rare.

JB Tuttle - December 17, 2017 at 10:00 AM

KA

*Sending love to Billy's family and to his devoted partner of 30 years, Don Lee.*

Karen - December 18, 2017 at 06:25 PM



“ *Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White was purchased for the family of William W. Richardson III.*



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December 16, 2017 at 04:51 PM



“ *I have wonderful memories of spending time at Chelsea surrounded by laughter, dancing, and music. Billy, Carter, and EB welcomed all with open arms. My sincerest condolences to his family, and Billy will forever bring a smile to my lips. Keep dancing for Billy.*

*Sincerely, Linda Roberts*

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**LINDA ROBERTS** - December 16, 2017 at 03:24 PM



“ *My thoughts and prayers are with this Family at this time of your loss. May God continue to watch over you, as He always does. It's hard to believe I have been away from my Victorian home on Main Street in West Point, for 20 years now, but I do remember the good times and parties Billy had. Hold on to the good times and memories, for that is good to do .*

*Sincerely, Richard Kelley Parkes*

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**Richard Kelley Parkes** - December 16, 2017 at 06:45 AM

FB

“ I will never forget my two visits to Chelsea and spending time with Bill. He welcomed this cousin and my husband Dixon Barr on both occasions along with my son, Rodman K. Swinford on the latter trip. We are cousins through Alexander Spotswood Moore, who lived at Chelsea. He was lots of fun to be with and our correspondence was interesting. I am so glad I got to know him. I convey my condolences to his family. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.  
*Frances Keller Barr*

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**Frances K. Barr** - December 15, 2017 at 09:48 PM



“ I will never forget my first visit to Chelsea. EB along with Mr. Gus had come to W&M to take Tiddle and me on a shopping trip to Richmond. When we returned that evening to Chelsea and drove down the crepe myrtle lined drive, I was immediately enthralled. Pulling up in front of the beautiful home, Billy, Carter and many of their friends came running out of the house to greet us. I truly thought I was in heaven! There were many wonderful weekends spent at Chelsea because as you said there was always a party! Your tribute captured the essence of Billy and he will be missed.  
*Love and prayers to the Family*  
*Joyce Stroop Winters*

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**Joyce Winters** - December 15, 2017 at 11:59 AM

TF

“ *My sincere condolences to the family of Billy. I met Billy in the early 60's when we were in college. I'll never forgot all those parties at Chelsea Plantation bringing in girls from William & Mary with all the music and dancing and all the good times. My special condolences to his brother, "Hunk." RIP, my friend.*

*Tom Fudala, Richmond, Va.*

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**Tom Fudala** - December 15, 2017 at 07:28 AM

RC

“ I first met Bill in 1967 while serving in the U.S. Navy, stationed at Cheatham Annex just outside Williamsburg. He became my friend when it wasn't popular to befriend the military. Bill remained a loyal friend all these years even though we lived miles apart.

*I always felt blessed to know Bill and to be able to spend time talking with his mom, EB, at the dining room table on visits to Chelsea. (1967-1968)*

*What a wonderful home the Richardson family gave me to visit while I was away from my own Tennessee home! I will forever be grateful.*

*My last visit to Chelsea was in 2015, when my wife and I spent a few days with my dear friend, Bill, and his loyal friend and caretaker, Don.*

*My thoughts and prayers go out to the Richardson family with the loss of their brother, father, and grandfather.*

*East Virginia will never be the same. I'll miss my friend Bill.*

*Rad Clanton  
Greeneville, TN*

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**Rad Clanton** - December 14, 2017 at 11:32 PM

TF

“ We Loved Uncle Billy, Rest In Peace. Chelsea Will Never Be The Same And You Will Never Be Forgotten.  
Love, Bobbi Ann, Victor & Trip

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**The Vanous Family** - December 14, 2017 at 11:06 PM



“ I want to convey my sincerest condolences to the Richardson family of Christy, Eric and Don as well as Bill Richardson's sister and brother. I had known Billy for about 20 years and there are a lot of memories of Billy and Chelsea that will not soon be forgotten. May God grant you some comfort during this difficult time.

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**Barbara Busch** - December 14, 2017 at 06:59 PM



“ So sorry for your loss. I have a lot of wonderful memories of the time I spent at Chelsea. Judy and I send our love and prayers.

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**Glenn Palmer** - December 14, 2017 at 02:10 PM