



William Powell "Bill" McPhee

August 13, 1923 - January 18, 2025

If the world, and more specifically, Wenatchee, seemed a bit dimmer on January 18 2025, it is because we collectively lost a beloved and treasured man.

William Powell Mcphee was born on August 13, 1923 in Auburn, Washington to William and Ada McPhee. He joined older sister Jean, who became his lifelong friend. Dad lived a fulfilling life and will be remembered by all who knew him for his gifts of love, kindness, gentleness, and a finely honed sense of humor.

After two years in college at the University of Washington, Dad and his best friend Tom joined the ROTC. They both worked on the railroad to earn their tuition. They volunteered to join the army, and since they had experience with the railroad, they were sent to New Orleans and worked on the railroad there. More training ensued when they were transferred overseas to Britain, where dad was a 2nd Lieutenant, given his railroad experience. Ultimately, he was promoted to major.

After leaving the military, (he remained in the reserves) Dad launched into his next adventure. Graduating with his degree in education, he developed a passion for the education of children. Beginning his career in Winthrop he then was blessed to meet his soulmate. That sister of his, declared to him one day "I have found the woman for you"! And boy was she right! They dated for

six weeks before entering a marriage that would last just shy of 70 years. They chose to move to Wenatchee when dad was offered a teaching position there, and the children of Wenatchee became the fortunate recipients of one of the most passionate, committed and truly respected math teachers in the Wenatchee Valley. He held that position for decades. There was literally nowhere he could go through the years without running into someone that knew him as their “favorite teacher”. He has had phone calls throughout his life, even into his final years, from former students thanking him for the tremendous impact he had on their lives. He believed that mathematics was magical, and he shared that with his students through his patient and gentle understanding that each student was gifted. He just loved imparting how math was “perfect” and “beautiful”.

Dad loved many things. He gifted his three daughters with deep loves of gardening, the ocean, birds and the simplicity of life. He taught us all how to row in a little wooden boat on the Puget Sound where we vacationed every year, making Orcas Island our second home to this day. We spent some winter evenings at home making “cod jigs” that for the most part we promptly lost in the kelp beds during some of our happiest childhood days on the island. His mottos included “Never let the bird feeders go empty” and “Always look on the bright side”. He often told Mom after spending time with his beloved roses, “I’m always closer to God in my garden than anywhere else”.

He was always soft-spoken and wise. It was deeply understood that we and our brother Kenny were loved. An enduring gift was that of his bedtime stories. He spun intricately detailed stories of brother and sister “Thatch and Mary Lou”, who along with their dog “Flubber” had many adventures AND misadventures. We eagerly waited to hear what would happen next. Grandchildren and great grandchildren continue to benefit from these nighttime stories, thanks to many cassette recordings.

However. Dad loved Mom more than anything on Earth. He often stated this. It was an unbelievable love affair that lasted until his last day. They were inseparable until her death 18 months prior and dad mourned her every day he was without her. It is our greatest comfort that they are together again forever.

He is survived by daughters Lorna Osborne (Dean) Valerie Villeneuve (Tim) , and Glynis Mcphee. He was thrilled to have added to his world six grandchildren: Aaron, Shon, Kate, Mellissa, Madisen and Rachel. Nine great grandchildren added to the joy.

Dad was predeceased by the love of his life Katherine Moira, his son Kenneth and grandson Aaron Dempsey.

The world was made tremendously better for having had him, and we will miss him greatly every day.

No memorial services are planned.

Arrangements by Jones & Jones - Betts, Wenatchee, WA.

Tribute Wall

RD

“ Bill McPhee was my 7th grade math teacher in 1956. Hp Ellison school. I remember how he talked about ROTC and serving in the reserves. I wound up getting an NROTC scholarship to college (minored in math) . Served 5 yrs active and 222 in the reserve. Richard Dillow CAPT USN ret

Richard Dillow - March 31, 2025 at 03:15 PM

LR

“ I had the privilege of taking care of him in his last days. I will miss his presence, his kindness and his humor everyday. I still see him in the hallways, remember how he likes his coffee and can hear his voice saying “you’re something special kid.” He will be greatly missed.

Libby Rinke - January 30, 2025 at 12:50 AM

GM

He thought very highly of all the staff at Avamere and bragged often how his coffee was at his table before he got there. "I never even had to ask for my Cheerio's and sausages... they just brought them"! Thank you for your kind care of my dad.

glynis mcphee - January 31, 2025 at 02:51 PM

JT

“ I graduated in 1999. Mr. McPhee was often a substitute teacher in my high school years. I always enjoyed having him as a teacher. He made math enjoyable. He will surely be missed. I had a great conversation with him last year. He was a top tier teacher and person! Jovon Thompson

Jovon R Genereux Thompson - January 23, 2025 at 07:24 PM

JD

“ I had Mr. McPhee for 8th grade math at Pioneer Jr. High. He introduced me to the world of mathematics. His love of that field was infectious. I was enlisted by him in 9th grade to review and grade his tests from other classes. I was most fortunate to have another terrific math teacher in high school , Mike Madland, for calculus. I think Mr.McPhee would have approved of my choice to major in Civil Engineering at UW. He probably would have been less approving of my going on to law school (Duke) and becoming a litigation attorney! It was a pleasure to read of his long and full life in your memorial. I owe him a great deal.

john dillow - January 21, 2025 at 11:35 AM

GM

Thank you so much for your kind words. Dad would've applauded your higher education. He would have given you a hard time (jokingly) about the attorney piece... But he would've applauded you! Duke! Nice!

glynis mcphee - January 21, 2025 at 09:14 PM

RD

“ Mr McPhee was my 8th grade teacher at H.B. Ellison. He told us about the reserves and it stuck in my memory. Great man! Richard Dillow CAPT USN ret

Richard Max Dillow - January 21, 2025 at 10:08 AM

GM

Dad would have remembered you, and would have been able to tell us when you were in his class and where you sat! He loved his students.

glynis mcphee - January 21, 2025 at 09:16 PM