



William Burton 'Burt' Ferguson

January 12, 1925 – August 5, 2010

A Memorial Service

To celebrate Burt's life.

Willamette National Cemetery

Portland, Oregon

11 AM, August 20, 2010

Scot Ferguson, Presiding

Order of the Service

Welcome and Introduction *Scot*

Psalm 23 *All*

Remembrances *Family*

Song *"Loch Lomond"* *All*

Remembrances *Family*
All

Hymn *"Amazing Grace"* *All*

Closing *Scot*

Burt will be interred alongside his wife Evelyn immediately following the service. All are invited.

William Burton Ferguson, a life

William Burton Ferguson was born on January 12, 1925, in Portland, Oregon. His father and mother, Mel and Stella Wood Ferguson, raised Burt and his older brother Melvin on a farm. Moving to Los Angeles in 1929, Burt spent most of his childhood there. He remembered the Los Angeles of his youth as a very welcome place; mostly sunny, without smog; a great place to grow up. Burt loved sports, particularly tennis. He played for his school teams, including Fremont High, and hung out in Exposition Park, where he made a lifelong friend of Pancho Gonzales. His family moved to Medford when he was 16, where he attended Medford High, and won the Southern Oregon tennis tournament! Moving back to Portland, Burt graduated from Franklin High, and was the captain of his tennis team. Burt enlisted in the US Navy right after graduation in June 1943, in the midst of World War II.

In the Navy, Burt served in boot camp in Farragut, Idaho, on Lake Pend Oreille, and then was trained as a signalman on the Champaign-Urbana campus of the University of Illinois. He became a proficient signalman, and was assigned to the crew of the US954. Just before D-Day, Burt shipped out to the Mediterranean, where his ship was the prime communications vessel for a small fleet; this fleet participated in Operation Anvil, a seaborne invasion of southern France, near Toulon, in August 1944. Based out of Naples, the US954 ran various reconnoitering missions until war's end, then sailed back to the East Coast. Burt was discharged from the Navy in March 1946 as a Signalman 1st Class.

Returning to L.A., Burt married Alma Parker in 1947. Their first two children were born in L.A.; Gregory Burton in 1948 and Shelby René in 1950. They moved back to Portland in 1952, where Burt began work with Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), and they had their second two children, Cynthia Elise in 1954 and William Scot in 1956. Burt worked for the rest of his career for PMA, rising eventually to the trusted position of Oregon Area Manager, which he held from 1969 until his retirement.

Burt had many passions besides his beloved tennis: Reading, cycling, wine collecting, chess, cars, and otherwise all things sports, possibly in that order. Throughout his life, reading was paramount; one of the most powerful and recurring memories that his children have of him was of their Dad sitting in his den, reading and taking notes. He was an avid cyclist, racing in local criteriums, and maintained an immaculate bike. He carefully amassed a wine collection and then drank it with great pleasure at just the right age.

Burt and Alma divorced in 1977, and he remarried in 1978 to Evelyn Sorenson. After Burt retired from PMA in 1987, they traveled extensively together, most often to Prescott, Arizona and Kona, Hawaii. Beginning in 1993, Evelyn suffered from a series of serious illnesses, finally succumbing to liver cancer in 2007; Burt cared for her until the end. Burt lost his own battle to cancer; when it became clear that his mesothelioma could not be beaten, he chose to face death directly, accepting hospice care at the end of his life.

Burt is survived by his four children, Greg and Shelby Ferguson, Cynthia Wiebe (Tom) and Scot Ferguson, stepchildren Gayle Remillard (Dave) and Diane Sorenson (Doug Hansen), grandchildren Jon and Benn Wiebe, and step-grandchildren Megan Smet, Christian & Kelly Hansen.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Loch Lomond

By yon bonnie banks and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae,
On the bonnie bonnie banks of Loch Lomond.

CHORUS: Oh! Ye'll take the high road, and I'll take the low road,
And I'll be in Scotland afore ye,
But me and my true love will never meet again,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond.

'Twas then that we parted, In yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side of Ben Lomond,
Where, in deep purple hue, the highland hills we view,
And the moon coming out in the gloaming. (*repeat Chorus*)

The wee birdies sing, and the wild flowers spring,
And in sunshine the waters lie sleeping.
But the broken heart it kens, Nae second spring again,
Though the waeiful may cease frae their greeting. (*repeat Chorus*)

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Evensong

by Thomas A. Wiebe



A life is lived to vespers from matins.
In campanili carillons ring out,
perpetually pealing out the hours.

And all the while, so deep and regular,
a basso reaches low to mete our time,
his ostinato echoes in the vault,
a solo drumbeat inexorable.

The ever new, there comes in morning light
the sound and fury of an infant's cries;
around the cradle family intones
a gentle warming dulcet lullaby.

In campanili carillons ring out,
perpetually pealing out the hours.

Comes hour three, a halting voice is heard;
a child sings once then pauses for a trice,
unfettered now and shouting ever more
a recitation, even aria,
the ancient tribal rhythms mimicked first,
unknowing, seeking blindly solo voice,
yet sings together with the children all
a choir symphonic and at once opposed.

In campanili carillons ring out,
perpetually pealing out the hours.

All lovers harmonize in hour six,
air endlessly their passionate duets,
now hearing music only they attend,
in thrall to moments of eternity.

In campanili carillons ring out,
perpetually pealing out the hours.

The hour nine so soon is near at hand,
in fields and orchards choruses resound
with chants to ease the harvest time travails,
in unison bring sustenance for all.

In campanili carillons ring out,
perpetually pealing out the hours.

At last, yes last, the evensong arrives,
the birds on wing still trilling madrigals,
and yet the seat remains unsure, astride,
still wand'ring in the gloaming paths unknown.

Oh live! Oh live! That ceaseless cri de coeur
of all souls, caged but irrepressible,
oft rife with fear - unreasonably so? -
of infinite corruption that is death.

Ah, evensong, e'en whispers to us now
across the commons to the heart alone,
which chants, which groans, which lifts, which seeks to know
that cryptic course to immortality.

In campanili carillons ring out,
perpetually pealing out the hours.
A life is lived to vespers from matins.



*Burt Ferguson
Palermo, Italy, 1944
known to his Navy buddies as Ferg and "Beak"*

The family suggests remembrances to the Providence Hospital Medical Foundation, in particular for Hospice & Palliative Care.

The family of Burt Ferguson would like to express their deep appreciation for the kindness and caring professionalism of the Providence Hospital Hospice team, in particular Kenny Phillips and Jan Andrews, who helped Burt and the family through Burt's final days with us.