

We lost Bill Stanton to cancer last Friday.

Bill had been a member of our club since 1976. President Bob, accompanied by Paul and Phil, presented Bill with his 19-year perfect attendance pin only last Thursday, the day before his passing.

A World War II veteran, Bill returned to Maine, working in management at Portland Country Club and the Eastland Hotel before going into business with his family as the owner of "Patty Ann's" (now DiCicco's) in 1966 until his retirement in 1983.

In a Rotary Club of prodigious workers - this Club we are so proud of - Bill Stanton had no peer. He never sought a leadership role, but his quiet contribution to every project, from food sales to road race to every public service event we assisted with to the Senior Citizen Party to tree sales (he took a great deal of personal pride in never missing a tree unloading as our "counter"), Bill was there with a smile and a kind word and a lot of hard work. As a regular duty, he served as Sergeant at Arms for our club for nearly all the time he was a member. He was recognized for his extraordinary service when the Club presented him with a Paul Harris Fellowship in 1991. Again in 2000, we honored him on the occasion of his 80th birthday at which, with his family present, we presented him with a "Distinguished Service" award.

Throughout his many years dealing with the public and during the 25 years of interaction in our Rotary Club, Bill remained a quiet, even shy man, polite to a fault. For some people it takes a great deal of courage to stand in front of others; Bill took great pride in standing with us. Even with us, with whom he was so comfortable, his innate reserve showed through. Bill always gave the last Happy Dollar, never wanting to interrupt any of us showoffs. Then he would quietly stand, and in a barely audible voice, give a dollar in recognition of an accomplishment of someone else. Very often it would be in honor of the "love of his life", his granddaughter, now a Stanford student, at his bedside when he passed away on Friday.

Bill had a great sense of humor and to get him to chuckle, "heh-heh-heh" was a delight. Even a week later, he would shake your hand and tell you how much he enjoyed the story or comment, and again we would hear, "heh-heh-heh", with a big grin.

Some of us were favored with lunch at the VFW on Friday for fish chowder, another place Bill was at peace and among friends. He always apologized for the "poor fare" but in truth it was delicious.

Bill could be pretty sensitive himself, too. Years ago, Bill was scheduled to work the food trailer at one of our summer events. It was a beautiful day and Bill decided after a lot of agonizing, I'm sure, to wear shorts to the event. This could not have been an easy decision for this very proper man, but he knew he was among friends and decided to take the plunge. He worked on Sunday afternoon for three hours. On the following Wednesday, Bill was not at the meeting, and our President announced that Bill had tendered his resignation. Two Rotarians invited him to lunch the next day to try to talk him out of his decision and also to find out the cause of it. Luckily for all of us, they were able to do the former, but Bill steadfastly refused to discuss any incident or any party involved that had lead to his decision. It turns out, however, that one of our people had jokingly told Bill, somewhat early in the shift, "I have seen better legs on a piano". Bill, more than likely still worrying about what he may have thought was a sartorial indiscretion, took great offense at the comment, never said a word, finished his shift and went home and penned his resignation.

Nancy remembers her second meeting as a member of Rotary. Bill won the raffle prize, a dried and decorated flower and herb wreath. Quite nice. Bill immediately handed it to her as a gift.

Bill Stanton, this kind, gentle man, was the best of us. The Rotary Club of South Portland - Cape Elizabeth is diminished greatly by his passing. His quiet strength and hard work should be examples for us all. Let's all work a little harder this year, stay a little longer on a project, and give an extra happy dollar for the accomplishment of a loved one. And serve with pride.

Godspeed, Bill.

William R. Stanton



SOUTH PORTLAND - William R. Stanton, 81, of Wythburn Road, South



William R. Stanton

Portland, Maine died Friday at his residence.

He was born in Boston, Massachusetts, October 1, 1920, a son of Roland and Jennie Mulholland Stanton. He was educated in the Pownal, Maine Schools and

attended North Yarmouth Academy.

Mr. Stanton served in the United States Army during World War II in the European Theatre in the Rhineland Campaign from 1942 to 1945. He was a member of the 26th Division serving as a rifleman and received his combat infantry badge for bravery under fire. He was also a recipient of the Purple Heart.

In 1948 he married Lucy A. Paradis. They had five children.

He started a bartending career at the Eastland Hotel in Portland and later worked at the Portland Country Club. From 1964 to 1982 he owned and operated Patty Ann's Superette in South Portland with his family.

In his retirement Bill enjoyed activities with the South Portland, Cape Elizabeth Rotary Club. He especially enjoyed the holiday season during which time he volunteered at the Rotary Christmas Tree Sale in Mill Creek. He was often the person who counted the 2000 plus trees that are unloaded each year. He also was very active with the Preble Street Resource Center in Portland serving meals on the Tuesday night. He was also instrumental in the planning for the Senior Citizens party every year for the Rotary Club.

Surviving is his wife of South Portland, five children, Jeffrey W. Stanton of South Portland, William J. Stanton of Portland, Oregon, Patricia A. Stanton of Readfield, Maine, Gregory S. Stanton of Standish, Maine and Philip H. Stanton of South Portland, four grandchildren and great grandson.

Contributions may be made to the VNA Hospice, 50 Foden Road, South Portland, Maine, 04106.

There will be no visiting hours. Friends and relatives are invited to attend a memorial service 11 A. M. Saturday at the Hobbs Funeral Home, 230 Cottage Road, South Portland.

OBITUARIES

William Stanton, 81; a reserved man remembered for generosity

PASSAGES

Each day the newsroom selects one obituary and seeks to learn more about the life of a person who has lived and worked in Maine. We look for a person who has made a mark on the community or the person's family and circle of friends in lasting ways.

SOUTH PORTLAND — William Stanton, a reticent but caring man, died Dec. 21, 2001, at the age of 81.

He raised five kids by tending bar and running a convenience store named for his daughter. In his later years, he gave back to the community that had long ago taken him in.

Mr. Stanton was of a generation not known for sharing feelings, said his daughter, Patricia, but his children knew how much he cared.

"He had a difficult life and rose above it," she said. "He was a man who would help anyone who needed help."

Mr. Stanton was born on Oct. 1, 1920, in Boston, a son of Roland and Jennie Mulholland Stanton.

His father died when Mr. Stanton was a boy. When his mother could no longer care for him, he was sent to live with a family in Pownal.

He attended Pownal schools and North Yarmouth Academy.

During World War II, he served in the Rhineland campaign as an Army rifleman with the 26th Division, and received the Purple Heart.

In 1948 he married Lucy A. Paradis. He tended bar at the Eastland Hotel in Portland and the Portland

Country Club — settings so formal, said Patricia, that he was more a butler than a bartender.

There, he developed a love and knowledge of wine and cooking that he passed on to his children.

From 1964 to 1982, the Stantons owned and operated Patty Ann's Superette in South Portland, a small store and neighborhood hangout where his kids often helped out.

After selling the store, Mr. Stanton devoted much of his time to the Rotary Club.

He liked helping with the club's annual Christmas tree sale, taking on

the job of counting 2,000-plus trees as they came off the truck.

Mr. Stanton also helped plan each year's senior citizens' Christmas party, and worked at Preble Street Resource Center in Portland.

"He was very regular about going (to the Rotary Club) — he had a sense of commitment," said his son Jeffrey.

"He wanted to contribute, so he did."

He was a private and reserved man, but a generous one, said Patricia.

Going through her father's things after he died, she found old letters

and pictures from college students who had worked for him summers, tending bar. Always, they thanked him for his help.

Surviving are his wife; four sons, Jeffrey W. and Philip H. South Portland, Gregory S. of St. and William J. of Portland, Ore.; a daughter, Patricia A. Stanton of Readfield; four grandchildren and a great-grandson.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at the Hobbs Funeral Home in South Portland.

—Abby Zimet