



William H. "Bill" Ashcroft

January 7, 1925 - February 19, 2025

Peterborough - William H. (Bill) Ashcroft passed away on Wednesday, February 19 at the age of 100. He was born in Auburn, Maine on January 7, 1925, to Velma Robinson and her first husband George Bean. Her second husband Allen G. Ashcroft would later adopt him, but Bill was primarily raised by his grandparents, Fred and Cora Robinson, with whom he had a very close relationship. He graduated from Edward Little High School in Auburn in 1942.

Bill had a lifelong interest in aviation, sparked by living across the Old Hotel Road from a then-tiny airport. He went on to get his private pilot's license, and had many memories of flying in and out of Greenlaw Field (also known as "Outlaw Field" due to the clientele). He had a passion for photography and took thousands of pictures, home movies, and videos over his lifetime, starting with a Bolex film camera as a teenager and eventually moving into the digital era. He was always up for an adventure, taking rides in a helicopter, an ultralight aircraft, and a vintage biplane. He was an avid film fan with a collection of DVDs that would rival some small libraries, and he enjoyed sharing this hobby with other residents of Pheasant Wood Center in Peterborough, NH. He also liked music, and two of his favorite bands were Kay Kyser and Spike Jones & his City Slickers.

Bill served in the US Army Signal Corps during the Second World War, stationed in the China/Burma/India theater where he learned to drive on the

Burma Road. He reached the rank of tech sergeant and chronicled his leaves in cities around China with his ever-present camera.

He worked as a film editor at the old WMTW Channel 8 studios in Poland Spring, Maine; as a linotype operator at the Lewiston Sun/Journal in Lewiston, Maine and Rumford Press in Concord; and in the camera departments at Rumford Press and CGI in Boston.

Bill was very involved in the lives of his children. This sometimes took him places he might not ordinarily have gone, like a live stage performance of The Rocky Horror Show. He and two of his children were in New York City during the July 1977 blackout and followed a Taft Hotel employee with a lighter up twelve flights of stairs to get back to their room, where Bill proceeded to open the window so he could lean out far enough to get a long-exposure picture of car headlights on the dark avenue below(!).

Bill was predeceased by his wife Maxine, son Mitchell, and second wife Patricia. He leaves his daughters Joyce of Concord NH and Dawn Bartel of Correctionville, IA, two sisters-in-law and a brother-in-law, nieces, nephews, and other family and friends. His family thanks the entire team at Pheasant Wood Center for ten years of care and support following his stroke in 2014, and also for helping to make his 100th birthday very special. Their thoughtfulness and dedication are much appreciated.

There will be no calling hours. Interment will be at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Auburn, Maine in the spring. In lieu of flowers, watch a movie that brings you joy.

Tribute Wall



“ *Very productive life...and a WWII veteran RIP* ”

Laurence French - March 04, 2025 at 10:20 AM