



IRELAND, ELWOOD F.

Elwood Fremont Ireland, age 89, beloved husband of Joan Ireland, died peacefully in Naples, Florida, on Sunday, February 9th. Elwood "Bud" Ireland was born on March 28, 1924 in Rutland, Vermont, the third child of Elwood Fremont Ireland and Francis Garcelon Ireland. Spending his early childhood in snow country, Bud became an avid skier. Also, living near Lake Memphremagog, he became a lover of seafaring ways, fashioning makeshift skiffs to traverse the lake. He developed his natural curiosity, inventiveness and sense of adventure that lasted throughout his life. When his family moved to Bethel, Maine, Bud attended Gould Academy, where he was an excellent athlete and student, setting track records, captaining the football team and winning the Maine state competition in all four skiing events; slalom, downhill, jumping and cross country.

Bud spent a short time at Bates College where he met Joan Merritt, his partner for life. After a year of pre-med study, he matriculated at Harvard Medical School and married Joan. Graduating from Harvard in 1947, he completed an internship in General Surgery at Hartford Hospital and then entered the Army with the rank of Captain, stationed in Stuttgart Germany at the Army Hospital there. While in Germany, Bud and Joan developed their shared lifelong passion for travel and adventure.

After completing a residency in Urology in Boston, Bud established a private practice in Fairfield, Connecticut, based at Bridgeport Hospital. During his tenure at the hospital, Bud served as the Chief of Urology and for many years as a member of the Board of Directors, but his most proud service was to his patients. His competence, graciousness and compassion as a medical provider was extraordinary, a comfort to so many patients and their families.

Bud was an enthusiastic and proud dad to his five children. He constantly inspired them with his lust for every aspect of life. He was a voracious reader and a student of world history. For 30 years he owned and captained a Morgan 34, sailing

with his family along the New England coast from Long Island Sound to Maine. At the same time he earned his pilot's license and flew a Cessna 182. He also embraced the sports of tennis, golf, and of course skiing. He frequently led the charge down the slopes of Mt. Snow near the family's ski house there. Bud would often carve trails off-track through the woods of Vermont, while his kids followed, crashing into trees behind him, trying to keep up.

Over time, the Irelands have been active members at the Fairfield Beach Club, the Pequot Yacht Club, and the Country Club of Fairfield.

Bud's early years with his father, Headmaster at Gould Academy, a carpenter by avocation, gave him an uncanny ability to build and fix almost anything. His basement retreat was a never-ending source of wonder and amazement to his children – something like Santa's workshop. He once built a Sealion 18 catamaran (which eventually won the North American championships in its class). At the time of his retirement, he learned and embraced the craft of Nantucket basket-making, creating scores of beautiful and unique baskets over a twenty-year period.

Upon retirement, Bud and Joan, always a team, went on a long-imagined odyssey sailing down the intercoastal waterway from Connecticut to Florida and back, a trip that capped off years of sailing excursions. Subsequently, they moved to Naples, Florida, embracing a whole new lifestyle and community of friends, first at Collier's Reserve and then at Moorings Park.

In his youth, Bud was sometimes known as Sonny, which seems now prophetic, as his disposition was perennially sunny, a characteristic that endeared him to all, patients, colleagues, family, and friends. He was sunny for a lifetime and remained so through his final days.

Bud is survived by his wife, Joan, his five children, Jane I. Silvestro, David, John, Douglas and Elwood Ireland and twelve grandchildren. Also surviving him is his sister, Lesley Sheehan of Reno, Nevada.

A memorial service will be held on Monday, April 14th, at 3:30 at the Naples United Church of Christ, with a celebratory gathering at Moorings Park to follow. Bud would be honored if, in lieu of flowers, you directed any memorial contributions to The Bridgeport Hospital Foundation, 267 Grant St. Bridgeport, CT 06610.