



William Perry Baker

December 15, 1935 - August 11, 2021

William Perry Baker, 85, of Columbus, Ohio, died Wednesday August 11, 2021 at Wesley Glen Retirement Community in Columbus, Ohio. Born on December 15, 1935 in El Dorado, Arkansas, Bill was the eldest son of Claude and Margaret Baker. Bill was a graduate of El Dorado High School, AR where he first developed a love and interest for music, in particular, the oboe. Upon high school graduation, Bill studied at Southeastern Louisiana College in Hammond, LA, where he earned his Bachelor's Degree in Music Education. At this time, Bill auditioned and was hired for the position of Principal Oboist in the Baton Rouge Symphony where he came under the tutelage of Maestro Emil Cooper, of St. Petersburg Russia, who personally worked with and conducted the symphonic works of the great composers of the "Silver Age of Russian Culture" including Igor Stravinski and Nikolai Rimski Korsakov. Bill also began studying under John Mack, who later became Principal Oboist for the Cleveland Orchestra. This was the beginning of what would become a life-long friendship. During his time at LSU, Bill became friends with trumpeter, Dr. Richard Burkart. Bill and Dr. Burkart built a close friendship that would continue when they became colleagues on the Music Faculty at Ohio State and beyond into retirement. Upon graduation from Southeastern, Bill was employed briefly as a Middle School Music Teacher at Jonesboro, AR. Shortly thereafter, Bill completed his Master's Degree at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, LA. Following this, Bill was hired as Associate Professor of Music at both Texas Wesleyan College in Fort Worth, TX and Southern Illinois

University at Carbondale. In the summer of 1962, just hours after his first son was born, Bill interviewed for and was hired for what was the newly created position of Associate Professor of Oboe at THE Ohio State University, a position that he held until 1988. During this time, Bill was also hired as Principal Oboist for the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, a position that he held until 1976. During Bill's time at Ohio State, he became a lifelong teacher and mentor to countless of students as well as a lifelong friend and colleague to many of the America's pre-eminent oboists. Bill established an Oboe Camp, which met annually at Put-In-Bay, Procter Center at London, OH and Kenyon College at Gambier, OH where he and other colleagues taught countless high school students how to make oboe reeds and to perform works of composers such as Telemann, Bach, Beethoven. Bill was also conductor of the Columbus Women's Club Symphony as well as Music Director and Conductor of the Land of Legend Symphony based in Newark, OH. Bill was also one of the founding members of Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra in 1979 and was Principal Oboist during the chamber orchestra's early years. Upon his retirement from Ohio State, Bill was Associate Professor for Woodwinds at Capital University until 1999. At this time, Bill helped establish the Lyric Woodwind Quintet, which performed and gave classes in the Licking County Public Schools as well as travels and performances at venues such as churches in Europe. As a parent, teacher, mentor and colleague Bill always stressed the importance hard work, a sense of humor and love for the arts as a means to give "color" and "soul" to a world too often obsessed with other interests. Bill loved spending time with his children, the memories of which included trips to his parents in Southern Arkansas, the outer banks of North Carolina and to Cincinnati Reds games. Bill was also a gourmet cook, a world traveler, and a licensed pilot of single engine aircraft. Bill had a huge passion for Ohio State Football, had season's tickets for years and loved to get together with family every game day in order to watch the Buckeyes. Bill was preceded in death by his parents, Margaret and Claude, his first wife and mother to his four children, Myra, and his second wife, Vivian. Survivors

include his brothers, Claude Douglas (Neva) of Waldo, AR; Paul David (Theresa) of Haughton, LA; son, Curtis of Columbus; son, Dr. John (Sandra) of Floyd, Virginia, daughter Ellen (Peter) of Columbus; son Justin (Deborah); along with grandchildren Samuel, Olivia, Ashley and Andrew. Bill will be missed by many students, colleagues, friends and family upon whom he had tremendous and life-long influence. A Celebration of Life service will be held on Saturday, June 18th, from 3:00-5:00 pm at the Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home, 515 High Street, Worthington, Ohio.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Gathering

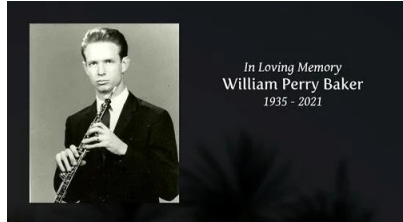
JUN 18. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Corbin Funeral Home
515 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085

Tribute Wall



“ *Rutherford Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of William Perry Baker*



Rutherford Funeral Homes - June 06, 2022 at 03:58 PM



“ *William Perry Baker*

January 28, 2023 at 10:24 AM



“ *Bill Baker was one of my closet friends, from high School, College, and OSU. We remained in touch via email an personal friends until his passing. His influence led to my many of my personal professionall achievements.*

Ron Nethercutt. The Philippines

Ron Nethercutt - September 27, 2021 at 12:50 AM

TM

“ His was a life well lived. I was just thinking about him, as I just watched the video of my wedding ceremony. It so great of him to play the prelude music at my wedding. I have many fond memories of lessons, reed making, and evening gatherings at his home. I often stopped to visit him whenever I was in Columbus and he would always send me home with a reed and sometimes a new piece of music. I have been working on getting my playing chops back and playing the the etudes and solos from college with his markings and comments. I am now even more determined to get back into playing form.

Tari (Quincy) McKee - August 22, 2021 at 09:53 PM

LV

“ I started taking oboe lessons from Bill Baker while I was in High school, and then continued as an Oboe major at OSU. I attended the Oboe Camp at Port Clinton that he started - and wow what an experience that was! He was a great teacher - personable and laid-back, with his twinkly eyes and sense of humor. But he expected and inspired perfection in us students. He even went to France and brought back some Loree oboes - one of which is my most prized possession. I got it from him in 1972 and still have it. I was very fortunate to have such a kind and talented teacher. I followed his lead - teaching music at Gahanna and then Worthington, and I had many private oboe students. I think of him so very often. He will be greatly missed

*Lori Rhodes Vaas
Worthington, Ohio*

Lori Rhodes Vaas - August 21, 2021 at 09:30 PM

NR

“ Bill not only conducted me in Wind Symphony for a semester, but gave me the opportunity two years in a row to perform with his symphony at the children's shows. I played both “Sam I Am” next to “The Grinch” from a Green Eggs and Ham orchestral work and Dr. Seuss's "Gertrude McFuzz." Thank you Bill for believing in me. You will be missed.

Nikki Rehmert - August 19, 2021 at 03:55 PM

MG

“ I grew up knowing Bill Baker. My dad, Don McGinnis, was also a facility member in the School of Music at OSU and played in the Woodwind Quartet with Bill, George Wilson, Jim Jones and Bob Titus who all have preceded him in death. I remember one time when the Woodwind Quartet was performing in Put-in-Bay and the men brought their families. It was my first trip there 50+ yrs ago.

My condolences to the family. My thoughts and prayers are with you.

Martha (McGinnis) Gamble

Martha (McGinnis) Gamble - August 14, 2021 at 04:02 PM

EB

“ Will miss my sweet cousins phone conversations. We send our thoughts to the family.
Eva and Charles Bayer

Eva Bayer - August 14, 2021 at 11:14 AM