



William E. Meals

October 19, 2008

William E. (Bill) Meals, Born September 9, 1910, died October 18, 2008. Bill Meals was born in Argentine, Pennsylvania to Closs and Rhettta (Mahood) Meals. The third son in a family of 7 children: Charles, Raymond, William, Helen, Dorothy, Lester and Chester. He is survived by his daughter, Jo Anne Snodgrass of Clopton, AL., and his son, Robert L. Meals of Pinellas Park, FL. There are 4 grandchildren, Michael Snodgrass, James Snodgrass, Schott Meals and Diane Vigliotti, 5 great grandchildren and 3 great great grandchildren.

When he was born, Argentine was a thriving mining town with 2 active coal mines, one at each end of the town. Several railroad lines carried the black gold to the rest of the world for the developing industrial revolution. The town had wooden sidewalks and a pool room lighted with flickering gas lights. The coal tipples, washing areas and picking tables were an important part of the mines and were visible for miles. There was a dance hall 100 feet square, a hotel and 3 schools. The coal locomotives tasked to carry the coal out of the area had billowing black smoke that would make your eyes water. Their ashes would spot the drying clothes on washday. Today all that remains of the town is the spoil piles near the mine entrances long ago abandoned.

Bill's lifetime saw an incredible development in America. When he was young, there were almost no cars. Everybody walked or rode horses on ash covered

paths. There were minimal paved roads, all would jar your teeth out. Can you imagine a chain driven steel wheeled dump truck? All airplanes had double wings and a propeller.

He did many jobs while growing up, even drove a team of horses to deliver coal to the local residents to fight the bitter Pennsylvania winters. He said he never owned a bicycle till after he was married. He was also an ice skater.

He quit school in the eighth grade to work in the mines as most young men did. He dug and shoveled coal for \$3.50 for a 14 hour day. He took a job as a "tamper" in order to earn an extra 25 cents per day. He tamped the dynamite into the holes for the shot that brought down the coal for \$3.75 for the 14 hour day. Yes, times were truly tough.

Married in 1940 to Mildred Whitmire of Butler, Pa. They had a daughter Betty Lou, stillborn in 1944, Jo Anne in 1945, and Robert Leroy in 1947. They lived in Butler, Grove City and Clintonville, Pa. They moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in 1957 from Clintonville with Jo Anne and Bob.

Bill's dad, Closs was a machinist and worked an oil lease. All his brothers were either machinists or did closely related work. Bill worked as an automotive mechanic at various automotive dealers thru the years in Emlenton, Grove City and Butler Pa., later in St. Petersburg, Fl. He had a Gulf gas station in Grove City around 1955. He became known for his trouble shooting expertise and knowledge of carburetors. He retired in 1977 from Swanson's where he had specialized in automatic transmission repair.

He adapted a gasoline engine from a Maytag ringer washer onto his reel type lawnmower. He made the first self propelled mover in the area around 1955. He had many ideas over the years that were before their time. He never had the resources to patent any of them, and some of them are in use today.

After his retirement Bill and Mildred fished and were also avid square dancers. They were members of local Lutheran Churches. In 1970 he developed cancer and endured an operation in each of the next 13 years. In 1984, Mildred retired from Rutland's Dept. store in St. Petersburg to care for him. He recovered and she developed health problems in 1985. He cared for her till her death in 1991. He was a devoted husband and care giver.

He was called on to provide information to other cancer patients. He always maintained a very positive attitude and was a survivor for 38 years after his diagnosis.

After Mildred's death, he followed his love of music. He recorded music and played for many local assisted living facilities. During his younger years he found he had an interest in playing a percussion instrument. He developed a skill not possessed by many. He researched, developed and ultimately manufactured his own sets of musical "rhythm bones. He had a passion for entertaining the audience and did so by playing his bones. He had appeared several times on TV, cut a record in Nashville and played in bands including Myren Floren's. He built a small "float" from a golf cart and equipped it with electronic music equipment to be driven in parades. He could be seen in a number of parades in western Pennsylvania where he spent summers till 2005.

He will be missed and NEVER forgotten.....

Thank you for your calls and prayers.

Jo Anne and Bob

Tribute Wall



“ *The family of William E. Meals uploaded a photo*

August 19, 2019 at 12:00 AM



“ *Craig & Susan Hinrichs - friends of son, Robert posted a condolence Wow! What a fantastic and full life William had, even in illness. Please accept our sympathy.*

Craig & Susan Hinrichs - friends of son, Robert - October 26, 2008 at 12:00 AM



“ *Wayne & Debbie Sipes - Friends of son Bob posted a condolence What a great tribute to your father. We know you will miss him very, very much. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time.*

Wayne & Debbie Sipes - Friends of son Bob - October 25, 2008 at 12:00 AM



“ *David Vaughn & Family - Friend & co-worker of son, Bob posted a condolence Our thoughts and prayers are with you in this time of sorrow.*

David Vaughn & Family - Friend & co-worker of son, Bob - October 23, 2008 at 12:00 AM



“ *robert &claire driscoll - friends posted a condolence we will miss a truly good friend,the world will be less entertained because of his death. our prayers are with you and his entire family*

robert &claire driscoll - friends - October 22, 2008 at 12:00 AM

AJ

“ Amelia Grimm & Dana Evans - Friend & Co-works of Bob Jr. posted a condolence Sincere condolences to the Meals family. We are praying for the family's comfort and peace.

Amelia Grimm & Dana Evans - Friend & Co-works of Bob Jr. - October 22, 2008 at 12:00 AM

RF

“ Robbie & Marge Robinson - Friends of Family posted a condolence In Prayer we share your grief. Robbie and Marge

Robbie & Marge Robinson - Friends of Family - October 22, 2008 at 12:00 AM

DB

“ Dave & Marilyn Bossard - Good friend of son, Bob posted a condolence Dear Bob, Our heartfelt prayers and thoughts are with you. What a beautiful statement of his life. Bob, you are your father's son. We love you. Dave & Marilyn

Dave & Marilyn Bossard - Good friend of son, Bob - October 22, 2008 at 12:00 AM