



## William Clark Mills

November 27, 2019 - May 6, 2024

William Clark Mills, Captain, United States Navy Reserve, Retired

November 27, 1958 – May 3, 2024

Palo Alto, California

Bill Mills, beloved son, brother and uncle, loving friend and colleague, passed away after a nine-year battle with dementia at Ivy Park, Palo Alto, CA on May 3, 2024 at the age of 65.

Born in Heidelberg, Germany to 1st Lieutenant Robert Rourke Mills, Jr. and Carol Ann (Price) Mills, he moved with his family around the United States, receiving his high school diploma at Leilehua High School on Oahu, Hawaii in 1976. He was in the National Honor Society, active in band, having played the clarinet since he was a child, and was a class officer his senior year. He attended Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, earning his B.S. in Electrical Engineering. He was a member of Triangle Fraternity.

Bill entered the Navy in September 1981, attending Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School and Basic Flight School at Pensacola, FL being commissioned an Ensign, US Navy and becoming a helicopter pilot with the HSC-15 Red Lions Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron. He served in the Grenada War as a search and rescue helicopter pilot on the USS Independence and toured extensively in the Indian Ocean. After eight years of active duty, he spent many years as a helicopter pilot and the NATOPS (Naval Air Training and Operating Standardization) Officer in the Naval Air Reserves

Squadron HS-85 at Naval Air Station Alameda, CA whose main mission was anti-submarine warfare. He was fondly nicknamed the “Professor,” so knowledgeable was he of the aircraft and of procedures applicable to the operation of all US Naval aircraft. He retired from the Navy in 2011.

Bill moved to Palo Alto, California in 1989 to obtain his MS and PhD in Electrical Engineering at Stanford University, completing his dissertation on the design of a space suit for Mars exploration. He was a software engineer at Silicon Genetics/Agilent Technology, designing bioinformatics software. Bill was an avid runner, having joined BayLands FrontRunners in 1992, near its inception. He invited many friends who were looking for a more active lifestyle to join the running club. Besides running, he loved the Saturday morning, post-run coffees, movie nights, camping and hiking trips and the yearly Reindeer Run. He was the proof-reader and editor of The Tides, the BayLands FrontRunners’ monthly newsletter for many years.

Bill was well-known as an enthusiastic baker, bringing his special family chocolate cake and huge apple pies to the BayLands FrontRunners’ social gatherings and to the many family gatherings with his little sister, Kathryn Mills Gestri, and her family in Santa Cruz, CA. He made the trip to Dortmund, Germany many times to visit his baby sister, Sara Mills, with her family. As a keen genealogist recording his maternal grandmother’s family Zahm’s history, he often continued those trips to France to verify old documents.

He is survived by his mother, Carol A. Works of Melbourne, FL; his father, Robert R. Mills, Jr., Colonel, United States Army, Retired, of Atlantic Beach, FL; his sister, Kathryn Mills Gestri of Santa Cruz, CA; his sister, Sara M. Mills of Witten, Germany; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A celebration of Bill’s life will take place in the near future.

Donations in Bill’s name will gladly be accepted to support

Stanford Healthy Brain Aging Study:

Medical Center Development

Stanford University  
485 Broadway 4th Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063  
MC 5470

Please add "Award allocation code: GHDPE" to the memo line to ensure that the check gets to the fund allocated to Dr. Henderson's study, where Bill generously donated his brain to research.

# Tribute Wall



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**Menlo Park Funeral and Cremation Services** - May 24, 2024 at 07:23 PM