

ROBERT CUSTER WOODSIDE, CDR USN (Retired)

OBITUARY

BORN: July 9, 1920; Philadelphia, PA

DIED: July 27, 2009; at home in Clarksville, MD; of bone and prostate cancer

SURVIVED BY: Daughters - Pamela Woodside (Mooresville, NC) and Wendeline Woodside (Clarksville, MD); Son - Geoffrey Woodside (Mooresville, NC); Grandsons - Bruce Stallings (Altona, NY) and Eric Stallings (Manchester, MA), Catherine Muse (Charlottesville, VA), Stephen Woodside (Greenwood, SC); Great Grandchildren – Thomas Corrow (Statesville, NC), Taylor Stallings (NY); Great Great-Grandchild – Thomas Bruce Corrow. Wife – Alice Ann DeCevee Woodside passed away August 1964. Daughter – Roberta Woodside Muse passed away December 2008.

USNA Graduate Class of 1943

A World War II Veteran, he was a Reconnaissance Pilot who catapulted in a Navy PBV plane off the cruiser USS Providence (a video of him narrating the actual film he took of this in 1940s can be seen at www.ussprovidence.org/prov-aviation.html). He was the founder of the NAVJAX Sailing Club in Jacksonville, FL, as well as the Patuxent River Sailing Club which grew to reach Navy bases as far as Manilla. Most notably was his co-founding the Sailing Club of Washington (SCOW) which grew from a band of 6 in 1962 to over 400 members in 2009. He was a coach with the Naval Academy Sailing Squadron for 50 years. He is the son of Elmer Lee Woodside, Capt. USN, USNA Class of 1917, and grand nephew of General George Armstrong Custer. His dedication to the military led him to convince many a young person to enter into a military career, and he was a great proponent of helping anyone enter the Annapolis Naval Academy. Upon his retirement from the US Navy after 21 years, he taught mathematics at Annapolis High School, infiltrated the Army Materiel Command in the personnel department, and retired again from the Army Corps of Engineers. Throughout his life he engendered everyone to learn and enjoy sailing, life, and the pursuit of happiness. Known to many as “Woodie” Woodside, the old salt could be noted by his canvas hat dotted with wine corks, his pirate beard, and meerschaum or corn cob pipe. His love of singing and playing the piano led him to marry Alice Ann Mitchell, the daughter of Concert Pianist Alice DeCevee Mitchell who started the Harrisburg Little Theater and Ehrman Mitchell, squire of Beaufort Farms in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania who started the Harrisburg Horse Show and Harrisburg Hunt Club. She was the granddaughter of Edwin DeCevee (on the internet for his Polanaisse) founder of the Harrisburg Symphony and grandmother Alice DeCevee, who toured America as The Great Contralto.

A memorial service with full military honors will be held at USNA Chapel at 10 a.m. on August 10th. For more information, contact (410) 531-6429. A burial at sea will be performed at a later date. Donations can be made to US Naval Academy Foundation, or US Treasury Memorial Affairs, Attn: Sharon Moffat, Gilchrist Hospice, or US Naval Sailing Association usnsa@usna.edu, or USNA Alumni Association.